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Towards A Politics of the Pure in Heart: Theological Reflections on Identities in Tension in Zambia

Scott, Keith

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by

Keith Scott B.D. M. Phil.

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List of Abbreviations

Afr. Aff.	African Affairs: Journal of the Royal African Society
A.N.C.	African National Congress
A.R.V.T.	Anti-Retroviral Therapy
B.S.A.C.	British South African Company
H.I.P.C.	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
M.M.D.	Movement for Multi-party Democracy
P.F.	Patriotic Front
S.A.D.C.	Southern African Development Community
S.M.A.	Society of Missionaries to Africa
S.O.A.S.	School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London
T.B.N.	Trinity Broadcasting Network
U.C.Z.	United Church of Zambia
U.D.A.	United Democratic Alliance
U.N.I.P.	United National Independence Party
U.N.Z.A.	University of Zambia
U.P.N.D.	United Party for National Development
Z.N.B.C.	Zambian National Broadcasting Corporation

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1 Introduction

Most Europeans arriving in Zambia for the first time are struck by the sense of empty space. The population of 11,862,740 is spread across a land area of 752,618 Square Kilometres. The country has large deposits of copper and cobalt; most of the known deposits are concentrated in the region known as the Copperbelt, close to the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo. The general elevation is around 1,000 metres varying from 329 metres to 2031 metres.[1] The climate is tropical - modified by the elevation - with three main seasons: hot and wet, cool and dry, hot and dry. The hottest months are October and November. The coming of the rains, normally sometime in November, moderate the temperatures and usher in the main planting season. The season usually ends in April, although in recent years the whole pattern has varied a good deal.

These simple geographical facts shape the history, culture and life of the peoples of Zambia, whether they are of African or European origin. The focus of life, even for urban dwellers, is on the rhythm of the returning rains, which bring hope and the renewal of life. Religious and cultural rituals mark the changing seasons, the patterns of rain, flood, harvest and dry. It was, however, the discovery of the vast copper deposits which shaped the recent history of Zambia. The mines of Copperbelt still provide a large percentage of the industrial employment in the country and most of the country's foreign earnings.[2] As a result the Copperbelt is the most urbanised and

[1] "CIA - The World Factbook -- Zambia," n.d., https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/za.html (Accessed 15 April, 2009).

[2] "Copper Mining in Zambia - Overview," n.d., http://www.mbendi.com/indy/ming/cppr/af/za/p0005.htm#5 (Accessed 9 September, 2009).

densely populated area of the country apart from nation's the capital, Lusaka. The economic activity of these urban centres attract people from every inhabited continent and from every cultural and linguistic group in Zambia. It is upon these cultural and linguistic groups that this work is focused.

Most sub-Saharan African countries are products of their colonial past. Their boundaries, drawn upon European maps to settle European conflicts, are careless of ethnic or kin group identity and territorial claims, often dividing kin and ethnic groups between two or more quite different colonial entities. For all their artificiality, the emerging post-colonial states of Africa have retained their colonial boundaries. This has left them with a particular form of identity crisis:

> The future of the state in Africa will depend on two very different factors: identity and HIV/AIDS. Can the nationals of each African country forge a common idea of what it means to be Nigerian or Angolan, Ugandan or Malian? In too many cases the different is perceived as alien, tolerated as such but never allowed full rights as a citizen.[3]

Zambia is no different in this respect from most other African states. Prior to the arrival of the European settlers there was no particular historical imperative for the disparate ethnic groups which now constitute Zambia to coalesce into a single nation state. It is therefore difficult to see to what Zambia's people can appeal to as the source of some common identity which can provide a sense of empathy and belong-

[3] "Royal African Society - The State of the State: The past, present and future of the nation state in Africa," n.d., http://www.royalafricansociety.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=282&Itemid=281 (Accessed 15 January, 2009).

ing with one another which transcends ethnic or regional loyalties. Like other African states, Zambia's future depends upon her finding at least the source of an inclusive common identity.

Reflecting on the well-known parallels between the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts Chapter 2 and the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11, Miroslav Volf writes:

> A theological... reading of the Pentecost account suggests that when the Spirit comes, all understand each other, not because one language is restored or a new all-encompassing meta-language is designed, but because each hears his or her own language spoken. Pentecost overcomes "confusion" and the resulting false "scattering", but it does so not by reverting to the unity of cultural uniformity, but by the advancing toward the harmony of cultural diversity.[4]

Identity brought to us through the Spirit, identity in Christ, is therefore the identity through which we come to our true unique humanity bound in the love of God to the true unique humanity of others. It is part of the mission of the Church to bear witness to this identity "in Christ" which transcends other forms of human identity, yet does so without collapsing human distinction into a dystopian uniformity which would, ultimately, be a loss of all identity.

This work is a search for a theology which will offer a resource capable of informing the church's mission in Zambia as it engages with the particular problem of identity. The theology which we will attempt to construct is what Robert Schreiter terms a "local theology", a means of making the church's missionary response to the Good

[4] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 228.

News “as concrete and as lively as possible”[5]. Our method is therefore a contextual method, coming to an understanding of the specific circumstances of Zambian life and formulating our theology as a second act. We will discuss the issues raised by this method below. First, however, we will make some effort to clarify the thesis we propose to test.

Any analysis of a society requires an interpretive perspective. A fuller discussion of the need for and the difficulties raised by any such perspective takes place below. We will for the moment simply state that as our interests are in the area of conflict and identity we have chosen to found our understanding of the conflicts in Zambia upon the work of René Girard. We do so in the initial belief that Girard's work, which is focused upon conflict and identity formation, will provide an effective and appropriate means to come to an adequate understanding of the conflicted aspects of Zambian life. This, however, cannot be simply stated and passed over; it is part of our thesis and must also be tested. Our method of constructing theology entails that our theology emerges out of our understanding of the context. Our choice of Girard's work as a foundation upon which to build our understanding of Zambia inevitably shapes the theological outcomes. We therefore state our thesis as follows: it is possible to construct an adequate and effective theology based upon an adequate and effective understanding of the conflicted aspects of Zambian society based upon the “revelatory anthropology”[6] of René Girard. We shall attempt to assess how far we have proved this to be a valid thesis towards the end of this work.

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5 Robert J Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1985), 1.

6 James Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong: Original Sin Through Easter Eyes* (New York: Crossroad, 1998), 25.

In the course of exploring this thesis we shall ask a number of questions as to how the identity of Zambia as a nation arose, the tensions which have strained that identity in the early years of the 21st century, the ability of that identity to resist those tensions and where, should Zambia continue along the path we discern, those tensions will lead in the short to medium term future. Prior to exploring these questions there are a number of further matters which we must clarify, the first of these being the nexus of issues related to doing theology.

1.1 Contextual Theology

Traditionally theology has been understood as a systematised set of propositional statements about the Christian faith founded upon Scripture, and, to a greater or lesser extent, the early strata of Church tradition. Both theology and its sources were considered to be fixed expressions of eternal truth. Since the middle years of the 20th century a number of different factors have converged to give rise to an understanding of theological truth as more dynamic, relational and contingent upon human experience and culture. Human experience or context has therefore become a third source for theological reflection and expression.[7] At the heart of the more recent views of theology is a focus upon the Incarnational nature of God's self-revelation.[8] This self-revelation is not a matter of propositional truths but an offer of relationship with God in the midst of human daily life. Reflecting on the process of translation, Andrew Walls suggests that the Incarnation is "a divine act of translation".[9] This translation of the divine into the human implies specificity. God does not become human without

[7] Stephen Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, Revised edition. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books (USA), 2002), 4.

[8] David J Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, American Society of Missiology series no. 16 (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1991), 426; Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 13-14.

becoming a particular human person, living at a particular time. There are specific historical and cultural constraints upon this Incarnate God if he is to be comprehensible to those whom he addresses.[10] The Incarnation then, is the fundamental act, not only of revelation, but of contextualization. This act of translation and contextualization gives rise to a succession of new translations as the Divine Word is made present in those distinctive features which make each ethnic community or nation culturally and linguistically unique.[11] The process of Incarnational translation involves a dialogical relationship. On the one hand, something new is brought into the life and language of a community as any text is translated. On the other hand, any alien text can only be understood in the already loaded terms of the receptor language, so that the receptor language stretches the meaning of the source. Likewise, incarnational translation implies that the Word becomes fully human, taken into the deepest recesses of human existence. This in turn calls for the response of conversion: "the opening up of the functioning system of personality, intellect, emotions, relationships to the new meaning, the new expression of Christ".[12] As in translation this dialogue takes both divine and human on a heuristic journey.

Inevitably there has been some debate as to how any re-translation of Christianity should proceed or how it should balance the demands of fidelity to the Gospel and the need to effectively enter into the lives of peoples and communities. Older terms, including "adaptation", "accommodation", or "indigenization" were based around a

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9 Andrew F. Walls, "The Translation Principle in Christian History," in *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 26.

10 A. E Harvey, "Jesus and Historical Constraint," in *Jesus and the Constraints of History* (London: Duckworth, 1982), 1-10.

11 Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, 28

12 Ibid., 28

model of "kernel" and "husk". The kernel is the eternal unchanging core of objective truth as always taught, the husk represents expendable accidents. There was, however, little agreement on the extent of the "kernel" which was, in any case, shaped by European presuppositions.[13]

A different approach emerged, in part, from the work of the Theological Education Fund (TEF) set up in 1957-58 by the International Missionary Council (IMC). Initially intended to resource theological education in the Majority World, its remit was later extended to a second mandate after the IMC joined the World Council and again to a Third Mandate. The term "contextualisation" made its first acknowledged appearance in the document. "Ministry in Context: The Third Mandate Programme of the Theological Education Fund (1970-1977)" published in 1972. The "Third Mandate" was intended to assist local Majority World Churches in training for ministry. This was to be undertaken with "the determinant goal….that the Gospel be expressed…in response to (a) the widespread crisis of faith, (b) the issues of social justice and human development, (c) the dialectic between local cultural and religious situations and a universal technological civilization".[14] The Third Mandate was therefore focused upon enabling the local church to develop local responses to the Gospel which met the needs of the local context, and the idea of a "dialectic" between local culture and a globalized technical culture suggests a considerably more radical approach than the "kernel husk" methods.

[13] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 449.
[14] David J Hesselgrave and Edward Rommen, *Contextualization: Meanings, Methods, and Models* (Leicester, England: Apollos/IVP, 1989), 25-29.

Adopting the term "contextualization", however, did little to clarify how theology should be carried out, and the term came to cover a wide variety of approaches.[15] At a more radical extreme are the "Revolutionary" or "Liberation" models of theology.[16] Gustavo Gutiérrez argued that theology arises out of a reflection on social and ecclesiastical praxis as "second step".[17] Such a theological reflection, he maintained, would entail a critique of the social and economic life of a community as much as the inner spiritual life of human beings. A more conservative approach is proposed by David Hesselgrave and Edward Rommen. They argue that there is "one basic theological orientation which can be thought of as both biblical and orthodox".[18] The form of contextualization arising out of this conviction they term "The Orthodox Didatic Method-Teaching the Truth".[19] Their intention is to establish "a communicational bridge so that unbelievers can be convinced of the truth of the biblical gospel and to teach the scriptures to those who are so convinced".[20]

Some order to the chaos was brought by Stephen Bevans.[21] He described six models of contextual theology: The Translational Model, The Anthropological Model, The Praxis Model, The Synthetic Model, The Transcendental Model, and The Countercultural Model. These models range in approach from the relatively conservative methodology of the "Translational Model", of which the model presented by Hesselgrave and Rommen is an example, to the more radical Anthropological Model represented by Robert E. Hood and Vincent J. Donovan. No one model, argues Bevans, is prefer-

15 Ibid., 144-148.
16 Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (S.l.: Orbis Books, 1973), 15.
17 Ibid., 11.
18 Hesselgrave and Rommen, *Contextualization*, 145.
19 Ibid., 155.
20 Ibid 156
21 Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*.

able to any other. Each has its advantages and its disadvantages and each has its appropriate uses in missiological practice and thinking depending upon the context.[22] It becomes apparent from this that theology is contextual in a fractal manner, the contextual pattern repeated at both the level of content and at the level of methodology.[23]

Bevans suggest that there are two basic theological orientations underlying the variety of models: a creation-centred orientation and a redemption-centred orientation. In broad terms creation-centred approaches would hold a more positive and affirming attitude toward culture. The Word of God is already present, at least in outline, and the church's witness is to articulate and clarify its presence. A redemption-centered theology holds a more negative view of cultures, arguing that they are in need of either radical transformation or total replacement. The Word of God can only come as something which breaks in from outside and manifests itself as a call to reject the world in order to embrace and accept God. The choice of orientation will determine the models of contextual theology one espouses.[24]

Once more it can be argued that these basic orientations are not entirely mutually exclusive. Robin Gill described five possible methods of engagement with pastoral, social and moral issues on the part of British Churches.[25] These possibilities sit along a spectrum not dissimilar to the spectrum between creation-centred and redemption-centred theologies described by Bevans. The engagement represented by Gill's "Transposition of Christian Values" being a "creation-centred approach" close in method to the Anthropological Model, where Christian values are seen as embedded

[22] Ibid., 139.
[23] Ibid., 140.
[24] Ibid., 21-22.
[25] Robin Gill, *Beyond Decline* (London: SCM, 1988), 39-63.

by long tradition in British society and the Sectarian Prophecy approach being redemption-centred, espousing a negative assessment and demonstrating a rejection of prevailing culture similar to that of the Countercultural Model.[26] Gill cites the South African Council of Churches' Kairos Document as a paradigmatic example of Sectarian Prophecy.[27] However, not every form of engagement is appropriate to every situation. British society, argued Gill, for all its faults, is not Apartheid South Africa and "sectarian prophecy may not appear the most appropriate way for British Churches to engage in moral and social issues".[28]

Walter Wink argues that what he calls "The Powers" - the spiritual dimension and reality of any culture - are to be considered as good, fallen and to be redeemed.[29] There is a goodness inherent in all human cultures, stemming from their nature as created by God who does not create anything intrinsically evil. Yet the Powers are also defective; they have become self-serving rather than God-serving, imbued at times with real and radical evil. Part of the mission of the Church is to proclaim their fallen nature to the Powers and to call them through word and practice to repentance and to co-operate with the redemptive purposes of God.[30] Thus any missiological engagement is bound to encounter both the goodness and the fallen nature of culture. This further elucidates the nature of contextual theology. Our basic orientation, methodological model, application and adaptation of the model, and the content of our

[26] Ibid., 51.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid., 54.
[29] Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 65.
[30] Ibid., 65-85.

theology are all responses to the context at different levels creating a complex fractal and heuristic pattern of dialogue between the church's witness and tradition and the local situation

1.1.1 Fidelity and Flexibility

The very flexibility and localised nature of theology raises the question of how one might ensure that our local theology remains faithful to the historical (and contextual) witness of the church to the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ.[31] One immediate response might be to consider redemption-centred models to be protected against this kind of failure. We must bear in mind, however, that any judgement upon the values of a culture may entail a negative assessment of what is culturally alien simply because it is alien, and that any theology which claims be, or to have privileged access to, the canon of orthodoxy is likely to conceal some form of imperialism. Any assessment of theologies must therefore be applicable to all local theologies.

Robert Schreiter provides five criteria of orthodoxy which, he argues, work in concert. A failure to meet one of the criterion will elicit a negative judgement upon a theology while all five must be met in order for a theology to attract a positive assessment.[32] Schreiter's criteria are: The Cohesiveness of Christian Performance, The Worshipping Context and Christian Performance, The Praxis of the Community and Christian Performance, The Judgement of Other Churches and Christian Performance and The challenge To Other Churches and Christian Performance.

[31] Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 22.
[32] Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 117-118.

1.1.1.1 The Cohesiveness of Christian Performance

Schreiter argues that any local doctrinal symbol must be consistent with the entire body of Christian thought. Even a high degree of internal coherence is no guarantee that a doctrine is consistent with the rest of Christian teaching. Schreiter takes the Arian doctrine of Christ as a case in point. It was internally consistent, but undermined the Christian understanding that Jesus Christ was and is the incarnate self-revelation of God, and thus also seriously undermined understandings of grace and sacrament. Schreiter also makes use of the doctrine of the hierarchy of truths, with cohesion with some traditional doctrinal symbols being more important than cohesion with others. Schreiter admits that there is no real clarity about the notion of the hierarchy of truths. As a broad guide, however, he argues that any formulation which requires major alteration of the meaning of large parts of Christian traditional symbols or differs profoundly from them is likely to be inadequate.

1.1.1.2 The Worshipping Context and Christian Performance

Schreiter argues that any faithful theology must lead the community to worship which is coherent with Scripture. He refers again to the case of Arius. The liturgical formula of baptism in the name of the threefold name, rooted in the very earliest stratum of Church tradition, indicated to Athanasius that the three must be equal. Arius' understanding of Christ as created was profoundly at odds with this central formulation and lead to what could not possibly be truly Christian worship and practice.

1.1.1.3 The Praxis of the Community and Christian Performance.

Schreiter reflects that the biblical phrase "by their fruits shall you know them" is one of the oldest means of determining Christian identity. If a community follows through a theology which does not or cannot in principle give evidence of the fruits of the Spirit then the theology must be deeply questioned. Schreiter is particularly concerned about responses to the Gospel which call for violence. He asks, "what happens to those who see this pathway as the genuine response to the gospel in this situation"?[33]

1.1.1.4 The Judgement of Other Churches and Christian Performance

Schreiter argues that a theological formulation should always leave a local Christian community willing and open to the assessment of the rest of the catholic Church. A local church which refuses to accept the judgement of the wider Christian community cannot fulfil this criteria. This, he notes, is particularly true in Roman Catholicism with its centralisation, but it is also true of those Churches which put a strong emphasis upon the authority of the local congregation. The expulsion of the South African Dutch Reformed Church from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches is a case in point.[34] Schreiter accepts that older European or North American churches can use this criterion as a means of exercising illegitimate control and authority over younger communities. He therefore argues that the older churches should equally be subject to the exercise of judgement and assessment by others, and be ready to reshape their theology and praxis accordingly.

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[33] Ibid., 119.

[34] "Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa," n.d., http://philtar.ucsm.ac.uk/encyclopedia/christ/cep/drcsa.html (Accessed 15 July, 2010).

1.1.1.5 The Challenge to Other Churches and Christian Performance

All local theology should move beyond itself in order to contribute to the insight of the wider Christian community. This contribution, in balance to the fourth criterion, may well be a judgement on the praxis of the wider community, or some other local community.[35]

One of the tests upon which the proof, or disproof, of our thesis will depend is how far we can construct a theology which fulfils these criteria. We will therefore return to these criteria towards the end of this work.

1.1.2 The Orientation and Model Informing This Work

There are many aspects of Zambian life and culture which can and should be affirmed and from within which the Gospel can be drawn. We have chosen to reflect upon a specific issue in Zambian society, that of ethnic relationships and identity and have chosen a specific method of analysis, founded upon the work of Girard. Our approach tends to lead us to adopt an orientation and methodology more appropriate to the "redemptive" part of the spectrum of models described by Bevans. It could have been otherwise, had we chosen some other aspect of Zambian life upon which to reflect and deployed other interpretive perspectives. Girard leads one to a rather negative assessment of all culture, which he sees as formed by mimetic conflict expressed in myths of redemptive violence. The redemptive models described by Bevans take seriously those darker aspects of culture which entrap and entangle people in the

[35] Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 117-121.

"non-being" of Sin. One outcome of our thesis should be that the Girardian framework we have adopted opens up insights into aspects of Zambian social life which are crippling and destructive of human existence. [36]

Theology must not end at bleak descriptions of sin, it must become "part of the process through which the world is transformed",[37] offering hope and liberation from that which cripples and destroys. This is particularly true of a redemption-orientated theology, which must both challenge current church life and provide opportunities for a new pastoral and missionary praxis leading towards transformed human living. To that end we make some tentative suggestions in our final chapters concerning the life of the church and the wider community in Zambia, well aware that such suggestions must not be seen as the arrogant advice of an outsider but the humble offerings of one who was part of the life of a Zambian Church and continues to hold a genuine concern for its witness.

1.2 Sociological Research

Contextual theology, no matter upon which orientation it rests, must take seriously the social context within which it attempts to articulate the Good News. This in turn requires some sociological research.

[36] Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 117.
[37] Ibid.

1.2.1 Questions for Sociological Research

David Fraser and Anthony Campolo suggest that sociology asks four basic questions: "What is going on here?", "Why is it happening?", "What is it like for the actors living in it?", "How good or bad is it for humans?".[38]

1.2.1.1 What Is Happening?

This is what Campolo and Fraser call minimal description, an effort to "get the facts straight".[39] It must, however, include the context in which actions are taking place as well as a straightforward description of the actions themselves. The meaning of actions alter as the context alters. Raising a fist may be a threat, a salute, a gesture of triumph, each differing meaning dependent upon the context. Thus "To understand the physical act is to locate it within its appropriate action-meaning sequence"[40] This can apply to simple events, like the raising of a clenched fist, or more complex events, such as actions within the context of a conflict. Determining the facts accurately entails getting the right description of not only the actions and their sequence, but also correctly identifying the context.

1.2.1.2 Why is it happening?

This is the process of attempting to explain the processes and events which are being described. It is an attempt to "state what underlying forces and factors" bring events and actions about.[41] This will include the socio-cultural factors which lead to events occurring, an analysis of what makes the event the sort of event it is: pro-

[38] D. A. Fraser and Anthony Campolo, *Sociology Through the Eyes of Faith* (Apollos, 1992), 155.
[39] Ibid., 156
[40] Ibid.,
[41] Ibid., 157.

longed, brief etc. and what brings it to an end. It might also include the social and cultural effects of repeatedly engaging in certain types of activity: warfare; human sacrifice; and publicly blaming the poor for their poverty. To explain events it is necessary to build theories and models to posit systematic answers to the questions of human experience. These are distinguished from hypotheses which are "tentative explanations of relationships between the facts of certain phenomena".[42] Good theories are a "system of validated hypotheses" which offer a systematic explanation of a social reality.

1.2.1.3 What is Life like?

This is the attempt to catch the inner feeling of the social world being studied. It includes attempting to construct, or reconstruct, the feelings of the actors, their motives and outlook, their hopes and fears. An in-depth description of the social world will include the small as well as the large details, the confusions and passions of the actors as well as the larger structure and patterns of the social world which they inhabit. "One has to authentically reproduce the sense of a particular way of life when the actual actors would respond to the description with recognition: "That's the way it was! Were you there?" [43]

This is a highly subjective process which will be deeply dependent upon the socially engendered view of the interpreter. It will require the acquisition of cultural "background" which the participants take for granted. This in turn will entail that the observer "checks out", carefully feeding back his/her own understandings to mem-

[42] Ibid., 158.
[43] Ibid., 159.

bers of the local society in order to ensure that they are adequate. An effort of empathetic imagination will be required to enable an interpreter to "get inside" the experiences which are being observed. The very vividness of description entails some evaluative interpretation which is, at least in theory, absent from the rather more dispassionate descriptions of events in physical sciences. The act of empathetic imagination assumes interconnectedness and common humanity, a value which is not "scientific" because it is not open to the kind of process of falsification required by science.

1.2.1.4 How Good or Bad is it For Human Beings?

This is a matter of putting a valuation on the social process. There are those who argue that "values" have no place in the scientific enterprise, and that sociology should be entirely non-judgemental and value free in its analysis of society. It is, however, hard to imagine how such evaluation can be absent from sociology in the way that it might be assumed to be absent from the physical sciences. Sometimes even the "bald" facts carry with them implicit evaluation. A simple statistic of infant mortality carries with it a sense of this situation as bad or good for human beings. As the subject matter of sociology deals with human beings as they live in society, a more indepth description of society cannot avoid evaluation. Neutral observation may well be appropriate for the dissolution of copper in sulphuric acid, but not for the dissolution of a nation into chaos with all the attendant death and destruction.

Anthony Giddens claims that sociology is of itself a "subversive" discipline in as far as it deals with problems which are of significant interest to all of us.[44] Part of that subversive quality is that sociology has more than simple understanding as its aim - it intends to understand in order to change the social order. This in itself implies evaluation; the point of change is to make things better, by more order, more peace and stability, more prosperity more equitably distributed, less crime, and less poverty, less of the malign effects of poverty and ignorance.

1.2.2 Difficulties in Sociological Research

There are a number of problems associated with any effort to answer these questions, revolving around the subjective nature of human interpretation of experience. These are problems with all efforts to interpret events so that they become meaningful. The seemingly objective research in the physical sciences is not immune to being shaped by paradigms, and sociological research is in no way exempt.

The first difficulty is that the whole process of collecting data will be governed by the paradigm from within which the sociologist is interpreting the world. In fact there may well be several confusing paradigms in play, given that the sociologist has a variety of social identities open to her. This is compounded further by the nature of sociological data collection. Statistics of GDP or unemployment seem fairly impersonal, and not unlike the kinds of data available in the physical sciences, but sociological statistical data is not all that it seems. Much depends upon the interests and objectives of those collecting the data. When measuring unemployment, for example, what exactly is being measured. Is the parent staying at home to look after children

[44] Anthony Giddens, *Sociology: A Brief but Critical Introduction*, 2nd ed. (MacMillan, 1986), 2.

employed, unemployed, or simply statistically invisible? What of the subsistence farmer in rural Zambia, is she employed, self-employed, or unemployed? When it comes to GDP matters are further complicated by the choices of accounting methods used to compile and present the data.[45]

The second problem is that all data collection involves some element of social interaction, which in turn affects the data collected. First, those whose actions one is studying may well modify their actions in unpredictable ways as a result of being studied. While this problem is most obvious in methods of study which involve a high degree of interaction between the observer and the observed, such as participant observer methods or focused interviews, it can also be true, even of methods which seem to require a very minimal and neutral interaction. Statistical surveys, for example, can be affected by what is known as "preference falsification", where people publicly state one view while privately holding another. Daniel Posner argues that statistical survey material on ethnocentrism in Zambian is rendered suspect by this phenomenon.[46]

There are a number of further problems involved particularly in methods where there is a high degree of interaction between the observer and the observed. A participant observer will become, at least in part, caught up in the events in which s/he participates; the interviewer will bring his/her own antipathy or sympathy with the person being interviewed or their point view. Even the dispassionate survey will have

[45] "World Bank: Data - Change in Terminology," n.d., http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20451503~menuPK:2236139~pagePK:64133150~piPK:64133175~theSitePK:239419~isCURL:Y,00.html (Accessed 17 July, 2009).

[46] Daniel N. Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 94.

something of the surveyor stamped upon it. In all cases, the interaction between the observer and the observed will become part of the social interactions or events observed. In effect, the act of observation changes the events observed.

Evaluation and proposals for social change are also imbued with difficulties. Evaluation can only be derived from an ideological position. It is simply not possible to evaluate without some measure of what is “bad” or “better”, which is rooted in the observer's perspective. This is an inevitable part of any human interpretation. The major problems arise when a decision has to be made between ideologies. It is hard to say that this or that ideology is more or less humane in its intentions than another; all human social and political ideologies have created and legitimated some level of inhumanity and oppression.

With these difficulties in mind we will now attempt to describe how we went about our research in Zambia in order to answer sociological questions.

1.3 Research Methods

1.3.1 Fieldwork in Zambia

The main method of research was that of the “participant-observer”. In this method the researcher lives in the community which is being studied and immerses him/herself as far as is possible into the life of the community s/he is trying to understand. The process requires at least some acquisition of local language and a willingness to mix and participate in local society and social life. It is a slow method, requiring a long-term effort of getting to know people and building relationships. It is impossible to enter into an alien culture immediately. There is that inevitable part of crossing the

cognitive frontiers where nearly every interaction is alien, and/or open to complete misinterpretation. Therefore a large part of the early phases of our research was simply "acquiring a background": gaining a basic understanding of life as it is lived in Zambia. It is through this early acquisition of the background to Zambian life that one comes to discern and focus upon issues which appear to be important to the observer. At this point we must admit that attention falls upon those aspects of life which are of personal interest. This writer has a long-held interest in matters surrounding identity and conflict. It was this which became the focal point of the secondary stage of our sociological research. Ethnic conflict is not the sum total of Zambian life, but it became clear from our interactions with others that it does pose a significant threat to the stability of Zambia as a state and the well-being of its people.

Total immersion in the host culture is deemed rare and most keep a certain distance whilst participating sufficiently to study things in their context and there is always a risk of over-identification with culture and community studied.[47] This writer spent just over six years in Zambia working with the Anglican Church in the primary role of lecturer at the Anglican Seminary of St. John The Evangelist, in the Copperbelt Province city of Kitwe and in a secondary role as part-time priest-in-charge of a series of parishes in a variety of settings. This gave the writer an immediate participation in the life of these communities, and allowed a natural working environment within which the constructive and informative relationships necessary for the participant observer method were able to emerge in the course of normal interaction.

[47] I. M. Lewis, *Social Anthropology in Perspective: The Relevance of Social Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 27.

As a European in an African country this observer was always at a certain distance from the local community cultural differences and the difficult history of interaction between Europeans and Africans ensured that a total immersion was never entirely possible. Nor is it possible in a few short years to master every local language and dialect spoken in Zambia. English, however, is sufficiently universal, to allow the effective communication necessary to gain insights into the culture.

1.3.1.1 Choosing Respondents

One of the difficulties in the participant observer method is the choice of respondents. Survey respondents can be self-consciously weighted to give a statistically meaningful cross-section of the community in which the survey is conducted. The observer in the participant observer method must ensure that the respondents to whom s/he turns can be seen to be representative of the culture in which the observations are conducted. The choice of respondent, however, can be unconsciously subjective. It is possible to choose respondents whose interpretation of events is similar to that of the observer, or who indulge in preference falsification. It is also possible to choose or avoid respondents on the grounds of personal preference for one person over another.

Some of the respondents who informed this observer were members of parishes in which the observer was working. They were usually leading members of the parish, Enrolling Members of the local Mothers' Union, Church Wardens, small group leaders, lay readers and members of the Church Council, filling those roles by virtue of their election by the local community, and therefore not chosen by the observer. The parishes ranged from town centre eclectic communities, usually relatively middle-

class, in which the services were conducted in English, through geographically based parishes drawing members from both formal and informal townships and one small rural community of subsistence farmers. All of these communities were made up of people from every province and ethnic group in Zambia, migrant workers drawn by the opportunities of industrial employment. Together they represent a social cross-section ranging from wealthy business people and senior company executives in the town centres through skilled artisans and underground shift leaders in the formal townships to unskilled casual labourers, the unemployed or retired labourers turned subsistence farmers of the informal townships and rural communities.

The other respondents were students at the seminary. Students for the ordained ministry in the Zambian Anglican Church are interviewed and nominated for training by an advisory panel. This writer played no role in the process, and thus had no role in choosing the student respondents. While the students represented a specific social group, relatively well-educated and fluent in English, they were also a cross-section of Zambian society, ranging from street-wise urban residents to those who had spent most of their lives in rural communities. As the Seminary is the only such institution in Zambia they came from every ethnic group and region in Zambia. They varied in age from young men and women in their early twenties to those who were well into middle-age.

We are therefore convinced that both our groups of respondents were representative of wider Zambian society. The observer played no role in choosing these respondents.

1.3.1.2 Making Observations

The participant observer method requires that the observer participates in the life of the community and ask questions as to the meaning of events and the feelings evoked. This observer had the privilege to be part of a wide range of social events: marriages and prenuptial parties, funerals and the baptism of children, many different celebrations and shared meals. Questions were asked when necessary, more often explanations were volunteered. Students responded to assessment questions by giving opinions, information and insight. The material was recorded in written journals, sometimes with an accompanying photographic record. Students also participated in more focused and deliberate class discussions which were recorded on tape. Understanding of life in Zambia was fed back to respondents, and checked out thus testing our insights against the way Zambians understand themselves. Some of the material gathered formed the basis of reflective pieces published as an Internet "blog" at www.cmsirelandireland.org/scott, now no longer available. Other material gathered was incorporated into longer and more academic pieces which also engaged with other known research, thus testing our own emerging insights in the light of other sociological studies of Zambia.

In addition, material was gthered from both local press and international news media. Research in the Zambian press must be set with a caveat. Press freedom exists in theory in Zambia, but is precarious. There is only one privately owned daily newspaper, *The Post*. *The Times of Zambia*, *The Sunday Times* and the *Zambian Daily Mail* are all government owned. Government ownership of newspapers is more important than it might seem to be in media-rich Western nations. Access to electronic media is

exceptionally expensive, even by Western standards, and is limited to the urban areas. Many Zambians rely on the newspaper, usually borrowed from a friend, for their main source of national and international news. The government owned newspapers do report basic facts, such as court cases or traffic accidents, with reasonable accuracy. Opinion pieces and the choice of matter for the front-page headlines, however, most certainly reflect the interests of the government. *The Pos*t is a rather raucous newspaper which in one article professed to admire the British *Sun*. The paper does carry a certain amount of serious news and its choice of headline and opinion is up to the owner-editor Fred Mmembe. Mmembe has been arrested a number of times for "Insulting the President" and ran what might be best described as a rabid campaign against President Ruphia Banda during the Presidential By-election held in 2008. While *The Post* is genuinely independent of government control, Mmembe's opposition to Banda has become so entrenched that is difficult not to assume that the paper's reportage on political issues is driven by a political agenda.

The government press, together with *The Post*, do provide insights into life in Zambia, into what concerns Zambians and what motivates them to action. They are, however, awkward sources to use as they do not keep extensive web accessible archives. This observer retained cuttings or clipped material from the on-line version of newspapers, and on some occasions made contemporaneous notes. In addition, some archives were available, held in the libraries at the Anglican Seminary or Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation. Judicious use was also made of international media. The BBC has a surprisingly deep influence in Anglophonic Africa, and its Africa service is popular amongst Zambians. The Africa service content is usually accurate and up

to date. South Africa's "*Mail and Guardian*" also reports frequently on Zambian affairs and offers usually accurate reporting and intelligent analysis. These sources have been used to substantiate or document events which the observer experienced at first hand or came to know of through other means.

Material gathered by our direct interaction method and from local media is difficult to subject to any meaningful statistical analysis, and tends to be somewhat anecdotal. More objective material was gathered from the Electoral Commission. The voting patterns published by the Electoral Commission have been particularly useful in elucidating the more general impressionist and anecdotal evidence concerning the role of ethnic identity in Zambia. The source has its difficulties, and the evidence has been evaluated where it is used.

1.3.2 Theological Research

The theological research we have undertaken has been carried out as a second act. As our understanding of ethnic tension as a significant, if suppressed, aspect of Zambian life developed, our research turned towards the theological questions connected with "person", identity and conflict. Our research has been largely a review of theological literature on the subjects of identity and conflict. As our work begins with the work of René Girard, we also explore the writings of James Alison, a Roman Catholic theologian whose theology has been informed by Girard's work. We further engage with two theologians whose work has been shaped by conflicted contexts: Desmond Tutu and Miroslav Volf. Tutu writes from the perspective of the long conflict in South Africa, and Volf from the violent fragmentation of Yugoslavia. Volf's work is informed by the social model of the Trinity propounded by Jürgen Moltmann, and we

therefore also make an engagement with Moltmann. These are our main dialogue partners, and their presence in this work is entirely appropriate as those who have contributed considerably to a Christian response, both practical and intellectual, to what remains a highly charged and profoundly important question. In the development of our own contribution to this question we have been strongly influenced by the work of John Zizioulas. We have also examined the works of Karl Barth and Karl Rahner, whose recovery of the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity and insistent call to return all understanding of God to a proper foundation in revelation has been of inestimable importance to the 20th and early 21st centuries.

1.4 The place of this work in Zambian research

In addition to our own fieldwork, we have engaged with a range of published scholarship on Africa in general and Zambia in particular. We have particularly engaged with the ongoing debate concerning the role of ethnic identity in Zambia. Zambia is not an "over-researched" country and its problems are not subjects that have attracted a great deal of "high profile" interest. There have, however, been a number of sociological and anthropological studies of Zambian life. One of the earliest social surveys carried out in the region was that of J. Merle Davis and his team, originally published as *Modern Industry and the African* in 1933, and cited extensively in this work. This wide and important survey studied the emerging Copperbelt mining towns and the African migrant workforce. The Copperbelt continued to be the subject of sociological and anthropological studies, with Mitchell Clyde's study on Ndola and Luyansha published as *African Urbanisation in Ndoloa and Luyansha* in 1954 by

the Mission Press.[48] Further studies include: Ndola and Hortense Powdermaker's study of the Copperbelt city of Luanshya, published under the title *Copper Town: Changing Africa*. *The Human Situation on the Rhodesian Copperbelt* originally in 1962 by Harper Row; and Michael O'Shea's historical study of the Roman Catholic church on the Copperbelt published as *Missionaries and Miners: A history of the beginnings of the Catholic Church in Zambia with particular reference to the Copperbelt*, published in 1986 by the Mission Press at Ndola. Current research includes Daniel Posner's work published as *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa* in 2005 and cited extensively in this work. In addition to his own recent focus group-based research, Posner draws on some of his own earlier survey work as well as that of others. Other researchers on Zambia include Michael Bratton, and Alistair Fraser whose short papers, often published in the Royal African Society's journal African Affairs, are listed in the bibliography.

Some research is also carried out by Zambians themselves. These studies are usually on very specific subjects, such as HIV/AIDs or public financial accountability which form the main subject of interest for an organisation which has supported or commissioned the work.

What appears to be absent from studies on Zambia is any significant theological interest. Zambia has yet to produce a significant indigenous theologian, and the Zambian church, while it does have very capable theologians, seems to have missed an opportunity to engage theologically with its own situation. The primary resource for Zambian Christian reflection is the Roman Catholic Church's Jesuit Centre for Theo-

[48] Mission Press is a printer and publisher operated by the Roman Catholic Franciscan order in Ndola.

logical Reflection (JCTR). This organisation posts a number of (usually short) reflections, mostly by the Jesuit Priest Peter Henriot on its web site as well as publishing material in the Roman Catholic magazine. The focus of most of the material from this source is economic and social justice, with a usually trenchant critique of Government economic policy and a regular update on the "Basic Needs Basket" the cost of the most basic supplies necessary for "a decent lifestyle for a family of 6".[49]

While the work of the JCTR is highly important and influential for Zambia and those interested in its plight, it still has not carried out a major theological reflection on the subject which forms the focus of this work: the question of identity and conflict. Other theological interest in Zambia includes the Anglican Bishop of Northern Zambia, Albert Chama, who has been carrying out research work on development issues under the supervision of the University of Western Cape; Elizabeth Parsons whose doctoral thesis for Harvard University is as yet unpublished, and Anglican priest and seminary lecturer, Francis Mwansa, whose interest in witchcraft has led him to embark on research work supervised by the University of Pretoria. There are also some studies of church life in the context of Zambia, including a chapter in Paul Gifford's *African Christianity: It Public Role*.[50]

This study is therefore intended to fill a gap in theological reflection on Zambia. The well researched areas are to do with social and economic justice, or with HIV/AIDs which has attracted considerable financial support. It seems that only Daniel Posner's work carries out an examination of the issue of identity, and does so

[49] "Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection-JCTR," n.d., http://www.jctr.org.zm/ (Accessed 9 September, 2009).
[50] Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (London: Hurst, 1998).

without any theological content. A significant element of the original contribution of this work therefore lies in its carrying out a theological reflection in an area where none has, as yet, been carried out. The subject upon which we reflect, that of identity and conflict, is one of considerable importance, both to Zambia and to the wider world. Tension and conflict is a problem which afflicts all human societies, whether African, North American or European. There is little doubt, however one might conceive of the relationship between the two, that conflict and identity are intimately interrelated. Wherever the church is situated it will have to engage in mission in situations where this interrelationship plays a major role, and will require critical theological reflection to be carried out in furtherance of what Volf terms a "politics of the pure in heart".[51]

This thesis makes a further original contribution to the understanding of the emergence of Zambia. There is a significant amount of documentary evidence and a number of good studies on the subject of Zambian history, most of which cover the period of British influence and rule until the present. Some of these works are cited in the bibliography, including David Mulford's study, *Zambia the Politics of Independence 1957-1964* published by Oxford University Press in 1967; Henry Meebelo's study *Reaction to Colonialism* published in 1971 by Manchester University on behalf of the University of Zambia and the series of papers edited by Samuel N. Chipungu published as *Guardians of Their Time: Experiences of Zambians under Colonial Rule 1891 – 1964* by Macmillan in 1992. A number of other works offer a brief introduction to Zambian history as part of a study on other subjects of importance to those interested in Zambia or more general country studies. None of these historical works

[51] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 119.

are focused on asking or answering any significant question about the formation of identity. They are focused on the process and politics of the formation of the country. Mulford is somewhat unusual in seeing the African Nationalist identity emerging from the conflict[52] but even he does not go as far as to ask or attempt to answer the question we have posed here about how or why the identity of Zambia emerged from this conflicted historical process. This work's original contribution is to deploy the insight of René Girard as an analytical tool to examine the emergence of Zambian national identity and thus to generate a new and original insight not only into the past, into the history of the formation of Zambia, but the repetition of the patterns which emerged in the formation of Zambia from independence to the early part of the 21st century.

The use of Girard's thesis in analysing both the history and the present state of Zambia leads to a third original contribution of this work: the theology of "persons-in-relationship" modelled on the Persons-in-relationship of the Trinity. This is not the only theology of persons-in-relationship and the work of Desmond Tutu, James Alison, Miroslav Volf and Jürgen Moltmann which explore this model, are all cited in the main body of this work. However, these all have their weaknesses. What is developed in this work is a unique contribution which attempts to address these weaknesses and make a constructive contribution to further the development of theologies of persons-in-relationship that will continue to shape the missionary and pastoral praxis of the church.

[52] David Campbell Mulford, *Zambia: The Politics of Independence, 1957-1964* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 333.

1.5 Concepts, Language and Conventions

1.5.1 Race

For some, the concept of race is a useful and meaningful term offering a means of categorising the physical differences between broad types of human beings and is rooted in genetic reality.[53] In this view the human population of Africa can be classified into a number of differing "races".[54] Others argue that "race" is a "convenient inaccuracy" and should be replaced.[55] In this understanding "the various gene pools were so blended together and merging at the edges that it is not even convenient to distinguish different "races", but rather to consider that all Africans belonged to a single large and diverse race".[56]

"Race" is a fraught concept at the best of times. Throughout Africa's modern history it has been thoroughly contaminated by its use in unwholesome European ideologies. There is so much unhelpful "baggage" attached to the idea that it is difficult to use it in any uncontroversial way.

The language of "race" however, is one that cannot be escaped in any examination of Southern Africa. The European settlers built societies in which "racial" identity was a significant factor. The language of race describes their perceived reality. Where the language is used in sources it is repeated in this work, elsewhere it is accepted that the concept of "race" is an invention which is unhelpful, and even misleading.

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53 John Iliffe, *Africans: The History of a Continent*, African studies series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 10.
54 Ibid.
55 Philip D Curtin, Steven Feireman, Leonard Thompson, and Jan Vanisna, *African History* (London: Longman, 1978), 14.
56 Ibid., 15.

Those who used the language of "race" were adverting to something that does exist: the significant cultural differences between ethnic groups. By "culture" we intend the whole broad range of human social production from artefacts and buildings, through aesthetic products to perceptions of the world and self-understandings. Culture exists; there are real and significant cultural differences between groups of human beings. It is the contingent and malleable nature of cultural identity which forms a central presupposition of this work.

1.5.2 "Tribe" and Ethnicity

There is some concern about the use of the word "tribe" amongst modern African scholars. As with "race", so "tribe" is understood as an invention of late 19th and early 20th century European thought, which has since passed out of scholarly use. "Tribe", it is held, covers too broad a range of social arrangements to express a useful and meaningful concept.[57] A range of differing words or phrases are used depending upon the relationships being indicated. Of these the terms most frequently used in this work are cognates or compounds of the term "Ethnic", hence "ethnicity" and "ethnic group". English-speaking Zambians, however, use the term "tribe" usually in place of the term "ethnic group" and its cognates. Thus Zambians will speak of the problem of "Tribalism" or the phenomenon of "Tribal Cousinage". Where these terms are used in direct conversation or documentary evidence they are quoted as they stand, elsewhere we have adopted "ethnicity" terms.

[57] Chris Lowe, Tunde Brimah, and Pearl-Alice Marsh, "Talking about "Tribe" Moving from Stereotypes to Analysis," *Talking About Tribe*, February 1997, http://www.africaaction.org//bp/eth-all.htm (Accessed 19 January, 2009)

In many Zambian languages the language of a particular ethnic group is denoted by the use of a prefix. In most of the languages spoken in North and Eastern Zambia the prefix is "ici".[58] In some sources this is written "Ci" as there is a tendency to drop the initial vowel in the spoken language, thus for example a person may be referred to as "*umuntu*" or simply "*muntu*". To complicate matters for the English speaker, vowel sounds elide into one another when one word ends with a vowel and the next begins with one. This changes the intervening vowel sound as well as making it difficult for the English speaker to be entirely sure where one word has ended and another begun.

There is also a prefix to denote the name of the people in general, and in the Northern and Eastern languages this is "ba", which is also used as a prefix to form the plural in one class of nouns and an honorific prefix to titles and names. Thus the people BaBemba speak the language IciBemba. When speaking English, most Zambians simply drop the prefixes and speak of themselves as "Bemba" and their language indiscriminately as "Bemba". This can lead to confused and confusing practice amongst European observers and commentators. Most commentators adopt the common Zambian practice when referring to the people as "Bemba", but refer to the language as IciBemba or CiBemba or Icibemba or CiBemba and likewise with other ethnic group and language names. This is the practice we have attempted to adopt in this work.

[58]The "c" being pronounced ch as in church

1.6 The Structure of this work

The main body of this work begins in Chapter Two with an exposition of the work of René Girard. In Chapter Three in we offer a short account of the history of the formation of Zambia. The fourth chapter explores this history using Girard's thesis as a tool for understanding the emergence of an African national identity. Chapter Five explores the patterns of fragmentation and coalescence which has marked Zambian political life since independence, a pattern which cyclically repeats the pattern of conflict and exclusion through which Zambia was formed. In the sixth chapter the life of Zambia in the early 21st century is explored with questions raised by the identification of the cyclical pattern of conflict and exclusion in mind. The seventh and eight chapters explore the theological issues of identity and "persons-in-relationship" which the analysis of Zambia's conflicted society raises. The following chapter, nine, offers some reflections on the possibilities of our theology for the praxis of the Zambian church. Chapter Ten assesses the effectiveness of our basic framework of interpretation, asking whether Girard's thesis has contributed to the development of insight into life in Zambia; specifically whether it has effectively explained the evidence gathered, offered some predictive vision for how the present patterns might unfold and carried forward into the development of a theological and missiological understanding which can shape the praxis of the Zambian Church.

2 René Girard: Mimesis, Violence and Culture

René Girard has spent a long academic career exploring issues of identity and conflict. His work has attracted both admiration and controversy.[1] We propose to build our understanding of Zambia upon his work, and to attempt to incorporate some of his understanding of Christianity into our theological response. Girard's basic thesis is simple and spare. This is, however, deceptive; his simple insight into mimesis unravels into complexity and has been adopted by a vast range of secondary literature.[2] The purpose of this chapter is to offer a basic introduction to the work of Girard, and the concepts he deploys. We begin our introduction of Girard's work by considering some general questions of identity and conflict.

2.1 Flexible and Multiple Identities

It is often argued that people have a number of possible identities in their repertoire which may change depending upon context and the roles and identities of any interlocutors.[3] Daniel Posner deploys Stacks' terminology of "Identity Categories" and "Category Sets" to analyse this flexibility in identities. Identity Categories are the labels used by people to identify themselves as belonging to one particular group: Scots, English, Catholic, Protestant etc. Category Sets are the wider sets to which a category may belong, like ethnicity and religion, for example. They define the nature of the question "which, of any given identity category, are you?" "Which province do

1 Chris Fleming, *René Girard: Violence and Mimesis* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004), 4-5.
2 Ibid., 1-2.
3 Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 11.

you come from?", "which tribe do you belong to?". Category Sets are thus designated by words like "Religion" "Ethnicity" "Nationality" and so on. It is possible according to this classification for an individual to have simultaneous access to a multiplicity of identities spread over a number of different category sets; but it is not possible to have access to more than one plausible identity in each category set. Identity categories within each category set are mutually exclusive. An individual's claim to any available identity category must be justifiable in terms agreed and accepted as valid within the context, in terms of ancestry, first language spoken, place of birth and so on. In this framework Zambians have available a repertoire of identities, and who they "are" in a relationship. Which of the available identities is prominent will depend upon the relational context in which they find themselves.

This conceptual framework has the advantage of offering some flexibility to the description of identity. It offers a viable analysis of how Zambians today can and do adopt a variety of plausible identities in a variety of social interchanges. It also implies a contingent and relational element to personal identity. Who a person is depends on the interlocutor, the context and the nature of the interchange between them. Posner says little, however, about the relationships between category sets in general, how it is possible to adhere to or reject a label in one category set on the basis of adhering to or rejecting a label in another category set, or how one group may allow or dismiss claims of another group's claim to identity categories in one set on the basis of their claims to an identity in another set. The willingness of one group to accept or reject another's claim to identity is connected, according to Beth Elise Whitaker, to the universally fraught issues of migration, settlement and national citizenship rights which

have complex historical inter-relationships.[4] These form the context of spiralling dances of conflict, exclusion and violence as actors seek to deny each other identity and belonging in pursuit of political and economic power which cannot, or will not, be shared to mutual gain.

Whitaker argues that the exclusion of political leaders on ethnic grounds spills over to fuel xenophobia and ethnic conflict.[5] Effectively, groups deny a sense of secure identity and belonging to one another, to exclude *a priori* each other from the right to even take part in a contest as part of an effort to create what Posner calls a "minimal winning coalition". This is an alliance based upon one of a range of possible identities available to the actors, through which a group or individual can achieve victory in any contest for social economic or political benefits with the least possible number of allies with whom to share, and therefore dilute, the spoils. This seems to lead logically to the thought that the identity of the alliance and of the individuals involved in it is called into being through conflict with other groups or individuals over desired social or economic goods. Posner, however, sees both individuals and groups as entering into competition with one another on the basis of pre-existing identities. In this lies an element of incoherence. For the appeal is to an identity which exists, if it exists at all, only in potential, until it emerges as a result of the conflict as the identity of the potential minimal winning coalition. In other words, identity emerges from the process of competition itself. One may be, for example, an IciBemba speaker in as far as one has the facility to speak IciBemba, but this is a skill not an identity. The group identity of "IciBemba speakers" does not emerge until it becomes the basis of

4 Beth Elise Whitaker, "Citizens and Foreigners: Democratization and the Politics of Exclusion in Africa," *African Studies Review* 48, no. 1 (April 2005): 109-126.

5 Ibid., 122.

a potential "minimum winning coalition" which includes those who speak IciBemba and excludes those who do not. Group identity therefore emerges in situations of rivalry in which one defines oneself and others in terms of the competition for some advantage from which others must necessarily be excluded. The actors described by Whitaker define themselves and one another in terms of access to the benefits of citizenship by an act of exclusion through which some are not members of the "nation". This reduces potential competition and thus establishes a smaller winning coalition. In this framework, therefore, it seems that identities emerge in conflict and are given coherence through excluding some from the "minimum winning coalition". That is stable identities, whether individual or communal, arise out of an act of exclusion.

A further problem emerges from the analysis which Posner uses. He says nothing about the emergence of new category sets. Yet the category set "Nationality" in Zambia, indeed in a good deal of sub-Saharan Africa, is a relatively recent arrival. Most commentators seem to take the existence of African nations and of a consequent national identity for granted and explore the questions of ethnic conflict within a nation with fixed boundaries. Given the novelty of the nation-state in Africa this is somewhat surprising.

Within the framework explored above it is possible to recognise that a national identity of sorts emerges out of the impetus to create a "minimal winning coalition" sufficient to overcome and displace the colonial power. Therefore this too is an identity called into being *ex nihilo*, by conflict and expulsion. How this identity is created, how it might be made more secure is a question not only pertinent to Zambia. With one or two exceptions all the African states were creations of some colonial

power or another. Their stability and endurance should be a matter of concern not only for the Church but for all who invest considerable effort and money in “development” and cannot possibly wish to see this washed away again and again in floods of instability and violence. To explore this matter further and shed some more light on the nature of Zambian society we now turn to the works of René Girard.

2.2 René Girard

One of the central features of Girard’s thought is the concept of “mimesis”. Mimesis is itself a rather complex and difficult concept and Girard's use of it somewhat idiosyncratic. The word itself is Greek in origin and gives us the root of English words such as “mime”, “mimic” and “imitate”. For Girard, however, there is something more than “imitation” going on in what he thinks of as “mimesis”. At its most basic the concept of “mimesis” describes how science and art - literature, plays, novels, paintings, even the mathematical descriptions of cosmology, our very language itself - “represent” the world which they attempt to describe. As human beings we learn to represent the world in these ways by another form of mimesis, by actions which imitate and represent the actions of others. At this level, Girard's concept is unexceptional. It is inherent in our nature as human, “under specialised” as we are to learn what it is to be human through imitation of others. As small babies we learn by “mimesis” (by imitation), to shape our meaningless babbling into sounds that are fed back to us as having “meaning”. This is not just how we learn a language, but how we become people. “Socialisation is contingent on learning 'how to do things' through detailed processes of tacit and explicit imitation, it is, indeed, exceedingly difficult to think of areas of human development that would be able to function

without this dimension".[6] To this Girard adds his more unusual and more controversial claim that human desire is also mimetic, that is mimesis also incorporates "acts of and intentions towards acquisition"[7].

2.2.1 Desire

Mimetic desire, according to Girard, is a central feature of human identity and formation made necessary by our underspecialisation. We learn what is desirable through mimesis. Humanity is the creature which has lost its instinctual focus on biologically predetermined objects of desire for something much more pliable. The food we eat, the houses we build, the partners to whom we are attracted, are all expressions of much more than simple biological desires for comfort, security and satisfaction. They are also expressions of more social and cultural realities. Moreover, "desire" may arise even in the absence of any specific need. In advance of, or even in despite of, the satisfaction of basic needs, desire arises which has no clear biological appetite as its origin. A desire which arises from the desires of those around us: "If desire were not mimetic, we would not be open to what is human or what is divine".[8]

Desire is not autonomous, arising out of the individual's own pre-existing self, but something which is engendered by the desires of others: "We assume that desire is objective or subjective, but in reality it rests on a third party who gives value to the objects."[9] Desire exists before there is a "me" to experience and express it. It is the "me" that is constituted and shaped by the desire which pre-exists us as individual persons. The characteristic design for desire is the triangle. Desire is not the straight-

6 Fleming, *René Girard*, 10.
7 Ibid.
8 René Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning* (New York: Orbis Books, 2001), 16.
9 Ibid., 9.

forward desire of an individual for an object, but desire for an object mediated by a third-party, called a "model", whose desire for the same object draws our attention to it as "desirable". The modelling is at its weakest when the gap between the model is wide and at its most intense when the gap is narrow, for example between sibling age-mates or other close associates. The tenth commandment prohibits the desire of what the neighbour has. The same Hebrew word is used to denote the desire of Eve for the forbidden fruit[10]. The desire of Eve, the desire forbidden by the tenth commandment is the desire of all human beings – "desire as such".[11]

2.2.2 Double Bind

Modelling is ambivalent, simultaneously encouraging and discouraging imitation[12].

> At the heart of internal mediation is a double-imperative; the implicit demand of the mediator is the command "imitate me"; yet, if this were done 'to the letter', the rival would need to assume the model's place (thereby placing the mediation itself under threat); therefore, the first message is coupled with another message, a warning: 'do not imitate me'. Internal mediation, then, is *conflictual* mimesis, as it entails the convergence of two or more desires on the same object."[13]

Thus mimesis involves rivalry from the outset, going further than wanting to have what the other has, to seeking to displace the other in order to be what the other is, *instead* of the other. Drawing from the Scriptures, Girard sees the concept of "scandal" as a central expression mimesis. The Greek words "skandalon" and "skandalizein" and the Hebrew words they translate describe "paradoxical obstacles" which are not easily seen and avoided. "skandalizein", he argues is rooted in the concept of

[10] Ibid., 8.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 17.
[13] Fleming, *René Girard*, 19.

limping. “To someone following a person limping it appears that the person continually collides with his or her own shadow”.[14] This seems best to describe the process of mimetic rivalry. The rivals continually collide with one another, each finding, and becoming for the other a fascinating and paradoxical obstacle; each becoming the shadow of the other’s rivalry and violence.

2.2.3 Conflictual Mimesis and Doubling

As rivalry between the model and the imitator intensifies, the initial object of rivalry loses its importance or is entirely forgotten. “When the rivalry becomes so intense that it destroys or disperses all its objects, it turns upon itself; kudos alone becomes the ultimate object.”[15] Girard calls kudos the “Talisman of supremacy”, the state of being unchallenged and unchallengeable. It is the power to strike with irresistible violence; it is to stand alone, unrivalled. The model/rival is destroyed, swallowed up and the victor stands in his/her place alone. This itself has a mimetic quality. All the contestants in what becomes a spiralling conflict seek ultimate kudos as the object of their mimetically engendered desire. As each seeks to finally eliminate the other blow after blow is struck, first by one then by the other, each blow responding to and repeating the other in a mimetic spiral. As the conflict intensifies kudos ebbs and flows between the contestants creating instability and dissolving distinctions between them. Girard refers to this phenomenon as “Doubling”.

[14] Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 16.
[15] René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 152.

> When differences begin to shift back and forth the cultural order loses its stability; all its elements constantly exchange places. So it is in tragedy the differences between the antagonists never vanish entirely, but are constantly inverted….The antagonists never occupy the same positions at the same time, to be sure; but they occupy these positions in succession. There is never anything on the one side of the system that cannot be found on the other side, provided we wait long enough. The quicker the rhythm of reprisals, the shorter the wait. The faster the blows rain down, the clearer it becomes that there is no difference between those who strike the blows and those who receive them[16].

Each protagonist enters into mimetic rivalry with the other in an attempt to outdo the other in the performance of unanswerable violence. Walter Wink, who accepts Girard's analysis with some significant reservations,[17] notes that in any conflict:

> Since our hate is usually a direct response to an evil done to us, our hate almost invariably causes us to respond in the terms already laid down by the enemy. Unaware of what is happening, we turn into the very thing we oppose.[18]

2.2.4 Catharsis

As the distinctions dissolve mimetic impulses travel through what becomes essentially an amorphous mob at high speed. This enables the about-faces and re-groupings which allow the transference of violence from one object to another. The mimetic process can thus be seen in terms of a self-propagating contagion.[19] This contagion of violence builds and leads to the culmination of the mimetic process: the "catharsis" in which the rivals are unified in their imitation of one another against a single arbitrarily chosen victim whose murder or expulsion causes a temporary peace. Violence is withdrawn from the original protagonist and transferred to another more at-

[16] Ibid., 158.
[17] Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers:* 144-155.
[18] Ibid., 195.
[19] Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 8, 32; Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 52.

tractive object, and the others are forgotten, or at least laid aside. The attraction of one object of violence over another is determined by the prestige and number of those who are initially in conflict with it/him/her. Smaller conflicts are absorbed into larger conflicts, which in turn absorb one another until one predominates and the polarisation of all against all is replaced by the polarisation of all against one. "The creature that excited its fury is abruptly replaced by another, chosen only because it is vulnerable and close at hand".[20] It is the vulnerability of the final most polarising object of violence which is important. He or she is usually someone outside or different from the immediate community, some person or group who is both close at enough at hand to be readily blamed for an essentially internal conflict and yet who can be discerned as "different" and marginal. It is important that the victim/s does/do not have any advocates within the conflicted community and is genuinely marginal to it, as choosing a victim with potential advocates simply risks perpetuation of a spiral of reciprocal violence.

Girard uses the term "scapegoat" to denote the victim of this kind of mob violence. Restoration of peace and harmony results from the explosive catharsis of what he terms the Scapegoat Mechanism. The conflicts forgotten or laid aside remain buried for some period, at least until the next outbreak of mimetic rivalry. Girard sees the victim or "scapegoat" as entirely innocent of the crimes of which they are accused. The term "mechanism" is also important as the process is entirely "mechanistic". There is no conscious conspiracy to choose a victim in order to heal social conflicts.

[20] Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 2.

The process simply happens, indeed, its effectiveness relies on a failure to recognise what is actually happening. It simply would not work if all the participants were totally aware of their actions.

2.2.5 Myth, Ritual and Religion

For Girard and his followers this mechanism underlies the development of all human religion and cultural identity. Often the mechanism's victim comes to be divinized, as both the creator of disorder and the bringer of peace and an elaborate myth grows up around the events which conceals their full reality behind a false transcendence, thus giving rise to religion. It is possible for mythologisation to be incomplete in some way, in which case something of the murderous violence of the events may be apparent. The fullest examples of mythologisation take place where the victims inspire the most terror, and whose death brings the most relief.[21] It is notable that in many cultures spiritual beings are often ambivalent, both nurturing, caring and creative, bringing order and peace, but also dangerous, deceptive, chaotic and violent.

Religion allows human communities to re-enact as closely as possible through ritual the original events of the murder as recalled in myth, and re-establish the peace which those original events engendered. Religion's sacrificial rites become mechanisms for projecting the potential for violence onto the cult's sacrificial victims which become the substitutes for the real objects of rivalry.[22] This process relies upon a certain amount of misunderstanding, or deception, concealing the displacement upon

[21] Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 67.
[22] Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 5-6.

which it relies. Yet the concealment cannot be entire; some awareness of the displacement and of the original object is necessary, otherwise the sacrificial rites lose their efficacy.

The cult allows human beings to walk the fine line of "controlled violence". Religion blurs the nature of the sacrificial rite, constructing the necessary aura of mystery and transcendence which conceals the human origin of the impulses to violence and yet at the same permits, even commands, the exercise of violence in certain well-defined and closely constrained situations.

> Men can dispose of their violence more efficiently if they regard the process not as something emanating from within themselves, but as a necessity imposed from without, a divine decree whose least infraction calls down terrible punishment.[23]

It allows human beings to overcome sympathy for, or empathy with, the victim while retaining sympathy and empathy with members of the community. This is important in maintaining social peace and order. In allowing human communities to divert the impulses for conflict and violence onto one single victim in this controlled fashion, the religious cult forestalls the outbreak of conflict in which all sympathy and empathy is dissolved and a reciprocating spiral of violence begins.[24]

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[23] Ibid., 14.

[24] Gareth Higgins, "God's Politics - Jim Wallis blog, faith blog, religion, christian, christianity, politics, values," *Sweeney Todd and the Spiral of Violence*, January 17, 2008, http://blog.beliefnet.com/godspolitics/2008/01/sweeney-todd-and-the-spiral-of-1.html (Accessed 25 February, 2009).

Girard argues that human societies are first ritualistic, rather than institutional and that later cultural institutions develop out of the ritual repetition of the founding murder and the social stability this engenders. These institutions have become refined over the centuries and have lost their direct connection with religion; nevertheless they remain, at root, religious, shaped by the constant repetition of the rituals so that "Actually it is religion that invented human culture"[25].

In choosing a victim for sacrifice a community is choosing a victim whose resemblance to the original object of violence is sufficient to allow effective displacement while still retaining sufficient difference to exclude complete confusion. It is also important that the victim is one who can be struck down without the fear of revenge.[26] There is no structural difference between human and animal sacrifice once the idea of sacrificial substitution is accepted. The modern tendency to differentiate between the two is purely arbitrary. In animal sacrifice, animals are chosen as sacrificial animals because of their close association with human culture so that they can be imagined as almost human.[27] In human sacrifice, the physical resemblance between two human beings makes the substitution more readily acceptable. Those who are chosen as human sacrifices are so chosen because, despite their obvious humanity, they are in some way outside the community group. They are slaves, prisoners of war, young children, or other marginal individuals. They can also, however, include royalty. The king or queen is in exactly the same sort of position as a marginal individual, isolated and essentially casteless.[28] Sacred kingship originates from the designation of the

[25] Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 92.
[26] Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 13.
[27] Ibid., 3 ff.
[28] Ibid., 12.

next sacrificial victim who is set apart as other and holy. If there is a delay between designation and sacrifice it is possible that the victim's very sacredness proves an attraction; people become his or her followers, wishing not the sacrifice but the preservation of the victim, at least for a while. In many early societies the monarch was often ritually slain, either on some regular basis or as the occasion seemed to demand.[29]

Myth and religious rites will not guarantee the preservation of social order, especially over the longer term. Eventually events overtake the rites - drought or famine occurs, or, despite the sacrifices, internal conflict with or without the impetus of natural disaster breaks out. This precipitates what Girard calls the "Sacrificial Crisis". A new cycle of mimetic violence develops threatening the very foundations of society,[30] culminating in a new scapegoat and the establishment of a new cult, or the re-instatement of some old cult in renewed vigour.

The Scapegoat Mechanism gives rise to humanity as "human" and to the possibility of any human society and its attendant linguistic and cultural forms. Mimesis occurs to some extent amongst animals. Animal societies are, however, marked by more or less instinctual "dominance patterns" or "dominance hierarchies" which limit conflicts and provide the template upon which social stability is based. Competition for "goods", and even dominance itself, is therefore limited and does not develop into the kind of mob violence to which humanity is so prone. The capacity for imitation, however, tends to undermine instinctual mechanisms. As the capacity for mimesis increases instinctual dominance patterns are weakened. At a certain point mimesis be-

[29] Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 92.
[30] Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 49.

comes so powerful and instinct so weakened that animal society becomes impossible. Hominization occurs when, and only when, the mimetic conflicts within pre-human societies reach the point where they escalate into the scapegoat mechanism.

> The increasingly human primate was able to transform the increasing violence in the crucial phases of its biological and cultural evolution into a force for cultural development. More and more elaborate cultural proto-institutions enabled the greater length of time needed for the immensely vulnerable and increasingly prolonged period of human infancy, and thus for brain growth. Thus it can be shown that the confluence of mimesis and the victimage mechanism enables Girard to account both for the continuing process of evolution and for the rupture between animal and human life.[31]

Thus from the very beginning humans find themselves in mimetic rivalry with others. Human society, culture, language, communal and individual identity arise out of the scapegoat mechanism.

Human individuals come to be who they are, their personality is engendered and continues to be shaped by relationships which are to some greater or lesser extent rivalrous and at the least potentially conflictual. No matter how effective, how carefully a parent or guardian "suggests" the personality of a child into being, no matter how loving and peaceful the present human community to which we belong, the communities into which all of us are born are already shaped by the Single Victim Mechanism.[32]

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[31] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 15.
[32] Ibid., 17.

2.2.6 Comments and Criticisms

2.2.6.1 Institutional Formation

There are a number of institutions which can be said to have clear links to the Single Victim Mechanism as described by Girard and therefore fit neatly into his framework. Whether this can be extended, however, to all human institutions and culture is a matter of some doubt. There is a deep sense of empathy and identification between humans[33] which even the darkest of religious rites finds difficult to overcome. It is possible to maintain that those institutions which have developed as mechanisms of support and succour arise out of those beneficial impulses. It can be argued that the modern Health and Social Service institutions in many Western countries bear the considerable imprint of Christian values.[34]

2.2.6.2 The Purpose of Myths

Walter Wink argues that not all myths mask the events of the Single Victim Mechanism. It is a central part of his view that myths tell the truth about the actual power relationships within a given society. His view, however, is not entirely inconsistent with Girard's thesis. Power and status within a society are closely related to the rituals of sacrifice. Thus myths which portray the foundation of any social order also serve as portrayals, and religious justifications, of contemporary power relations. Both the founding events and the contemporary hierarchical structures of a society are "misrecognised" and given a false transcendence by these myths.

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[33] Without which mimesis and rivalry probably could not develop.
[34] Gill, *Beyond Decline*, 51.

2.2.6.3 Large Scale Conflicts

Wink also suggests that the scapegoat motif is only a variation on the theme of violence, and argues that the combat myth of redemptive violence is more generic.

> Squaring off and slugging it out is the norm, and no third-party scapegoat is usually involved….Scapegoating occurs more often in intragroup rivalry rather than among nations with the result that the stronger combatant wins[35].

The process in which smaller conflicts are absorbed into a larger conflict is not absent from international conflict. There is nothing like an external enemy to generate internal social cohesion.[36] In war, as with any other conflict, the evidence is that smaller scale internal rivalries are swallowed up in the greater rivalry of the war. The enemy effectively plays the role of the single victim to the society of either contestant, and is often reduced to a single person, or referred to in singular terms.[37]

International conflicts can and do spread rapidly, spilling across borders and drawing in neighbours and allies to become regional, even global conflicts. As both World Wars developed, older rivalries were laid aside in a mimetic polarisation of many against one. Significantly these rivalries reappeared once the "victim" had been disposed of.

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[35] Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 153.

[36] Most commentators on Britain in the Second World War note that there was a sense of "togetherness" in the country during the war. Many commentators also note that the divisions and tensions apparent in 1982 would have meant defeat for the Conservative government in Britain at the next election, until that is, the advent of the Falklands War. Similarly it is notable that the whole process by which the disputed presidential election in the U.S.A was to be examined has been dropped as a for the sake of "national unity" following September 11 2001.

[37] "Our war is not against the people of … it is against…."(single individual or small group). The "hun" "Jerry". Etc.

There is little doubt that post-war mythologisation of conflict is developed by the victor and becomes an expression of the "new world order" which has arisen out of the conflict. The mythologies convey the new world order in terms which legitimate and conceal the human realities of this order behind a false transcendence. They also have a way of becoming an exercise in blaming the vanquished and so concealing the mimetic nature of the conflict.[38] Entire nations cannot, however, be transmuted and divinised in the way in which the individual victims of the Scapegoat Mechanism are. There is instead, a tendency to transmute and divinise those who died either as combatants, or as civilians, in the conflict, especially if they died in "our" cause, which is always, according to the mythology, a "just cause".[39] The result is that these myths of victory and conquest are less complete in Girard's terms. Wink is, therefore, correct in concluding that "combat myths" express a form of redemptive violence in which the combat itself, rather than the divine victim, is seen as the generative source of new life and order. This does not, however, preclude a strong mimetic element in international conflict, nor that the achievement of subsequent peace and order will not involve some form of "violent exclusion" recognisable as a variation of the Single Victim Mechanism.

2.2.6.4 Legitimate Violence

Local, even individual, conflicts can also mimetically spiral into more widespread violence. Where such conflicts do not catch "mimetic fire", it is often because they have been quelled by an exercise in legitimate violence. An exercise of legitimate violence limits vengeance to one single act of reprisal enacted with such authority that

[38] For example in the post WWI reparations, or in the Post WWII war crimes trials.
[39] Consider some of the wording on War Memorials.

there is no possibility of the mimetic spiral developing further. The institutions which exercise legitimate violence for maintaining peace and social order are attended by the same liturgical solemnity and imagery that attends religious ritual. This provides the same false transcendence disguising the actual nature of legitimate violence as an act of retributive justice which is not in any structural way different from the principle of revenge.[40] Capital punishment is an obvious example of the principle of legitimated revenge in action. Even where the punishment is not capital a person convicted, or even simply accused of offences which touch deeply into the social tensions of the day can become a convenient "hate" figure.[41] The danger lies in recognising the reality behind the mystification provided by ritual. Once this happens the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate forms of violence becomes uncertain and a crisis occurs.[42]

2.2.6.5 The Emergence of the Human

Wink argues that Girard's understanding of the emergence of human societies is speculation, which cannot, in the light of present evidence be further tested. Alison in particular, also shows a tendency to step directly from modern primates to their ancestors. This involves the assumption that modern "higher" primates are similar in physical, mental and social organization to the more distant ancestors of *homo sapiens*. This is by no means certain. All primates, including humans, may well be descended from common ancestors, but modern apes may be as different from those common ancestors as modern humans are. Nevertheless, there is a widespread ac-

[40] Gil Bailie, *Violence Unveiled: Humanity at the Crossroads* (New York: Crossroad, 1995), 85.
[41] Why else do people bang on the prison van and shout at prisoners as they are moved between courthouse and prison?
[42] Bailie, *Violence Unveiled,* 55-58.

ceptance that human beings derive and maintain their sense of self from their cultural and familial environment in a way which inevitably involves mimesis of, and rivalry with, parental and peer models. It is also widely accepted that these conflicts are frequently dealt with by "projection" or what some authorities call "paranoid behaviour" where the internal tensions, whether individual or communal, are projected onto others who then come to be at fault, the cause of all the problems.[43] The objects of such projection are most often those who are in some way outside the social norms, whether from ethnic or religious difference, or because their life styles are seen as in some way reprehensible.[44] Mimetic rivalry is a fundamental fact of historical human existence, all the more so in modern Western societies where competition in every aspect of life is turned into a virtue. It seems difficult to escape the conclusion that, speculative as it is, Girard's account is an elegant and economical interpretation of the available evidence. It accounts for the rise of human culture and the formation of human identity at both communal and individual levels, and does so in a way which satisfies the rather difficult problem offered by seemingly contrary evidence for continuity and discontinuity between human and animal societies. In Christian terms, he offers a vehicle for a more "process" orientated reflection, giving creation a more "autopoietic" status, consistent with a doctrine of God which is more kenotic, incarnational and relational in its model and consistent with current scientific cosmology.

[43] See Skinner & Cleese, "*Families and How to Survive Them*".

[44] For example, people with homosexual sexual orientation were "to blame" in the early stages of the AIDS epidemic in the West.

2.2.6.6 Innocence and Guilt

One of the more interesting modifications of Girard's theory comes from Miroslav Volf. Girard argues that accusations levelled against the victim are stereotypical and repetitive and have no basis in reality. His interpretation of Christianity is particularly dependent upon the innocence of Christ. Volf is less sure of the innocence of the victim. The focus on Christ as the innocent one has, he argues, distracted Girard from the fact that "[I]n a world so manifestly drenched with evil everybody is innocent in their own eyes."[45] Volf continues:

> Yet all know and all agree that somebody must be guilty; somebody's eyes must be deceiving them badly. But whose eyes? The eyes of the perpetrators? Of the victims? Of both, I want to argue, and in addition declare a "third party" complicit in the generation of contrived innocence, that chimerical goodness of self that is but the flip side of the evil it projects onto others.[46]

Even if the scapegoats are innocent at the outset, "Will they stay innocent as they are drawn into a conflict and as the conflict gathers momentum?"[47] Volf is clearly stating his questions in Girardian terms, and the answer to his questions would be a qualified "no".[48] The very humanity of both victim and perpetrator would tend to draw the scapegoat into the mimetic cycle, to become the "double" of the oppressive society, actively mirroring its disharmony, behaving in such a way as to fulfil the stereotype and so attract, even encourage, exclusion. Further, the status of victim can allow an individual or community to seize the moral high ground, to justify its own vi-

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45 Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 79.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid 80.
48 Qualified in the sense that there are those who have deliberately sought to escape the mimetic cycle, like Martin Luther King or Desmond Tutu.

olent response in the conflictual spiral. Girard attends to the Psalms as often expressing the voice of the victim, but the sheer rage and vengeful blood lust of some of those same psalms should alert us to the fact that the victims have lost their innocence as much as the persecutors.

In so far as the victim cannot escape the contagion of mimetic violence that lies at the root of all humanity, there is merit in Volf's argument. The question is whether this is entirely what Girard intends when he thinks of the victim as "innocent". His argument that the victim must be one who cannot attract support or empathy, because this would only prolong rather than end the mimetic cycle, indicates that he is not suggesting that victims are free from the contagion which surrounds them. Indeed, it would be profoundly illogical for him to do so. The victims, with the exception of Christ, are all considered ordinary, if marginalised, human beings. Like every other human being they are formed by, and give rise, to the conflictual mimesis which eventually singles them out as victims.

For Girard, the victim is innocent insofar as s/he is chosen arbitrarily; innocent of the stereotypical list of crimes of which s/he is accused and innocent of the underlying accusation that s/he is the cause of whatever crisis has beset the community. This is a very specific innocence, and implies nothing about the victim's place in the mimetic cycle. The Jews of early modern Europe were not guilty of the practices recounted in the blood libel.[49] That does not mean that they were any less prone to being caught up in more general cycles of mimesis and violence in the same way as the rest of the population. Volf seems to take a wider view over which victims may or

[49] R. Po-chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder: Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 1-3.

may not be considered innocent, a view that takes in the whole of their interactions with wider society. It may well be that it is he, not Girard, who has become distracted by the sinless nature of Christ. To the question of whether the victims avoid being caught up in the mimetic contagion in the wider range of their relationships with others, the answer must be "no." In the more specific sense the answer to an inquiry as to whether the victims are "innocent" of the crimes of which they are accused depends upon the circumstances of each specific case.

In some circumstances it seems not unreasonable to suggest that Girard is correct, to say that the victim of any particular instance of the Single Victim Mechanism is "innocent". It is not unknown, even in modern Western societies, for groups or communities experiencing a sufficiently intense level of social disharmony to be sufficiently blinded by the mimetic contagion that a coalition of all against one where the "one" is innocent emerges.[50] In other circumstances it seems reasonable to suppose that the social unease of a community has indeed been caused by the person who stands accused. An example of this could be a criminal court establishing beyond reasonable doubt that the person in the dock is indeed a supplier of illegal drugs which have plagued the youth of a working-class estate. The complex nexus of interrelationships between social forces and individual responsibility for crime suggests that, whatever else is going on, this too is an instance of choosing and excluding a suitable victim upon whom wider social tensions can safely be projected.

[50] Many of the lynchings in the Southern states of the U.S.A. for example

We would therefore suggest that in the narrower view of “innocence” of the victim to which Girard confines himself, the actual guilt or innocence of the victim is not relevant. Some individuals who appear in this work as the victims of the Scapegoat Mechanism are most probably guilty of the crimes of which they have been accused in the mimetic contagion, others are equally probably innocent. Whichever the case, we will argue that the Single Victim Mechanism has been at work.

2.2.6.7 The Effectiveness Of The Scapegoat Mechanism

Many would argue that the Scapegoat Mechanism is not, in the modern and post-modern world, working effectively to control the contagious nature of violence. Exposure of the workings of the mechanism undermines its effectiveness as it unveils the displacement and undermines the false transcendence upon which it depends. Girard argues that the Christian story has done exactly this, stripping away false transcendence and exposing the workings of the mechanism at its most powerful as Jesus becomes the truly innocent victim in a disordered society. One outcome of this is that, in an increasingly global society with many organisations and groups imbued with Christian values, victims can always find advocates. Thus instead of ending the mimetic cycle the mechanism simply perpetuates it by drawing new participants into the conflict.

A fuller discussion of Girard's account of Christianity will be carried out later in this work. In what follows it will be argued that the mechanism he identifies has functioned in the formation of Zambian national identity; that this functioning has been only partially effective in creating a genuinely secure and stable national iden-

tity capable of encompassing a critical mass of Zambian society, and that Zambia is consequently trapped in a mythic cycle of conflict crisis and expulsion that has failed to stabilise society.

2.2.6.8 An All Embracing Systematisation?

Modern and post-modern thought has been almost ideologically wary of systematisations which seem to be all embracing. It is a criticism of Girard's work that his theory of mimetic rivalry is a revival of exactly the kind of all-synthesizing project which has been judged to have run its course and failed.[51] Fleming, however points out that it is simply not enough to claim that Girard has produced an all-embracing "theory of everything" and to reject it out of hand on those grounds alone. Such a rejection involves one in a circularity: the espousal of the all-embracing theory that an all-embracing theory is to be rejected on the *a priori* grounds that it is an all-embracing theory. It may well be the case that Girard is indeed reviving this "exhausted adventure", but it is difficult to know this without assessing his project in the light of both the evidence he himself brings to bear upon it and such relevant evidence that others can uncover.[52]

Fleming argues that a critique of Girard's theory would involve either examining and accounting more effectively for the phenomena for which Girard seeks to account, or critiquing the internal logic and coherence of Girard's arguments.[53]

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[51] Fleming, *René Girard*, 158-159.
[52] Ibid., 159.
[53] Ibid., 159

In this work we are seeking to use Girard's thesis as a means of explaining the evidence gathered either by others or by this writer in the course of living and working in Zambia. As a test of the effectiveness of Girard's thesis it is far from comprehensive, nevertheless, it is a real test carried out in particular circumstances. We must, therefore, seek to assess how far Girard's theory accounts for the facts of Zambian life. If there is nothing of the culture and life of Zambia today which can be explained effectively and economically by Girard's thesis, then serious questions may be raised about his entire project, for it has foundered upon the rock of a particular reality. If, on the other hand, Girard's thesis does provide some effective account for the phenomena of life in Zambia, if it can be used not only as a method for accounting for the present but also, with albeit necessarily limited accuracy, as a tool for extrapolating present phenomena into the future - a method of reading the “signs of the times” and enabling the mission of prophetic challenge given to the church - then Girard's theory cannot be said to have been “proven”. It is simply that it has proved effective in this particular case. As part of the concluding material of this work we will seek to assess how effective Girard's theory has been in enabling this process, and how far it can contribute to the development of theological and missiological insight.

Having now introduced our interpretative framework, the next three chapters will examine life in Zambia, making use of Girard's insights as a means of understanding what is happening and why it is happening. This in turn will allow us some insight into what life is like for Zambians and whether or not Zambia's current circumstances are good or bad for human beings. We begin with a brief outline of the history of Zambia's formation as a nation in the next chapter.

3 Historical Background

The purpose of this present chapter is to describe, albeit briefly, the history of the formation of Zambia. The narrative intention of this chapter is consistent with the contextual methodology which we have adopted as the basis for this work. We engage in a simple process of "telling the story" prior to carrying out any reflection upon the story.

The African history is a vast canvas. Hominid remains have been found in Zambia dating back 130,000 years,[1] and the country is dotted with ancient rock art dated long before the coming of the first modern Bantu speaking Africans.[2] Consequently there is no straightforward way of telling the story without some selection and therefore some bias. If we must be selective, then there must be some rationale to our selectivity. Our focus is on the Zambia's present and its conflicts with the aim of envisioning possible alternatives founded upon the Gospel. Our focus must therefore be on that part of history which has the most bearing upon the emergence of the nation called Zambia: the colonial and immediate post-Independence period, with only a little attention paid to the pre-European period.

1 "Homo Heidelbergensis, Rhodesian or Broken Hill Man," n.d., http://piclib.nhm.ac.uk/piclib/www/image.php?img=51523 (Accessed 11 August, 2009). Accessed 11 August 2009.9)

2 The writer has seen small samples of ancient rock art at Mutinondo, near Mpika.

3.1 The African Past

The European powers imposed their colonial rule upon African territory which was certainly thinly populated, but not empty. The main cultures already present became known as the "Bantu". Their history, their cultures and languages played, and continue to play, a very significant role in the shaping of the colonial and post-colonial environment. The "Bantu"[3] cultures appear to have originated around the region now known as Cameroon and the neighbouring areas of Nigeria.[4] Evidence, such as it is, suggests that they lived in loosely affiliated kin groups, without a significant and organised central structure, and their identity was shaped by their belonging to a specific kin group.[5] Centralization into kingdoms appears to have emerged amongst the Bantu cultures in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo and the concept of the centralised state eventually migrated south into what is now Zambia.[6] The emerging nations were varied in terms of their centralization and organization but there was a good deal of political "borrowing" as powerful individuals competed with one another for control of resources and long distance trade.[7] By the 15th century there were societies which exhibited many of the features of discrete and centralized states with a clear sense of a common linguistic and cultural identity as a "people", capable of developing resources and regulating trade links across wide areas. These states came into contact with both European and Arab traders who were establishing them-

[3] The name "Bantu" properly describes a groups of languages and is taken from the root *ntu* used in words throughout the range of modern Bantu cultures to denote a human being. Thus in Icibemba *umuntu*/*abantu* = Human/Humans or Person/Persons.

[4] Curtin, Feireman, Thompson, and Vanisna, *African History*, 25.

[5] Joseph Calder Miller, *Kings and Kinsmen: Early Mbundu States in Angola* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 48.

[6] Irving Kaplan, ed., *Zambia, a Country Study*, 3rd ed., Area handbook series (Washington: American University, Foreign Area Studies : for sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1979), 4.

[7] Ibid., 8.

selves along the coasts. Inevitably as Bantu nations continued to vie with one another for access to trade, technology, territory and natural resources they made the best use they could of any advantages acquired through these contacts.

In Southern Africa the Zulu, part of a wider Nguni ethnic group, emerged under their king, Shaka, as the most significant power in the region. Their sudden and violent expansion generated what is known as the "*mfecane*",[8] the ensuing instability leaving a legacy in inter-ethnic relationships, language, and culture throughout Southern Africa. Villages grew larger and alliances were forged amongst loosely affiliated kin groups or between ethnic groups. Already well-defined groups centralised, smaller weaker groups were assimilated into more powerful neighbours, all in a search for security.

3.2 The Arrival of The Europeans

European colonisation of what is now Zambia began with Cecil Rhodes who had offered to establish a colony organised, administered and paid for by a Chartered Company, The British South Africa Company (hereafter the BSAC), which would be allowed to profit from land and mineral rights.[9] The Charter gave the Company the authority to negotiate with local rulers for treaties or concessions, and, on the basis of these, to occupy and administer territory. Rhodes' representatives persuaded Lobengula, King of the Ndebele, to grant the Company rights to exploit the mineral resources in his territory, and to do anything necessary to that end.[10] As Lobengula claimed sovereignty over most of what is now Zimbabwe the concession provided

[8] Zulu: "crushing" or "scattering", also known as the "Difaqane" or "Lifaqane" in Sesotho.
[9] Robert Blake, *A History of Rhodesia*, 1st ed. (New York: Knopf, 1978), 34-37.
[10] Ibid., 47.

Rhodes with a pretext upon which to claim British "effective occupation" of the territory in the face of stiff European competition. Rhodes subsequently proceeded to piece together a network of further treaties and concessions securing British influence, at least in European eyes, over a territory whose northern boundaries eventually reached to the Congo Free State and German East Africa.[11] The BSAC was allowed to govern the entire territory, both north and south of the Zambezi, until 1924, when the northern part became a British Protectorate, and the southern a self-governing colony.[12]

3.3 Northern Rhodesia: Company and Colonial Rule

The Company's original intention was to profit by expropriating land north of the Zambezi and offering it for sale to Europeans. This was not entirely successful simply because "the anticipated white-settler farmers failed to arrive".[13] The viability of the Company's project remained in some doubt until the discovery of large deposits of copper near to the border with the Congo Free State created a nascent industrial economy.[14]

3.3.1 Hut Tax

In order to be profitable the Company required cheap labour for its new industry and agriculture. Africans, understandably, had been reluctant to give up their familiar lifestyle for the mines, factories, farms and European homes throughout Southern

[11] Christina Lamb, *The Africa House: The True Story of an English Gentleman and His African Dream* (London: Viking, 1999).
[12] Blake, *A History of Rhodesia*, 91-92.
[13] Mwelwa C Musambachime, "Colonialism and the environment in Zambia," in *Guardians in Their Time: Experiences of Zambians Under Colonial Rule 1890-1964*, ed. Samuel N Chipungu (London: Macmillan, 1992), 8-29 The quote is from page 18.
[14] Hortense Powdermaker, *Copper Town: changing Africa. The human situation on the Rhodesian Copperbelt.* (New York: Haper and Row, 1962), 58.

Africa.[15] The Company therefore introduced a tax which became payable in cash in order to compel African men to engage in wage labour.[16] As the wages in industrial areas were higher than those paid by in the rural communities men tended to leave their villages, often for long periods. This disrupted the traditional social and economic life of the rural communities.[17] It also created an urban population reliant upon industrial employment for their livelihood. The Great Depression generated concerns that an urban population lacking employment would soon become sufficiently disaffected to turn to crime and violence. Consequently a number of mechanisms were adopted in order to encourage the urban workforce to remain in contact with their home communities and to compel those whose contracts had ended to return to their villages. These mechanisms were made up in part of restrictions on living in urban areas and in part embedded in the policy of Indirect Rule. [18]

3.3.2 Indirect Rule

The BSAC used local chiefs to aid its administration and the Protectorate Government developed this into a programme of "Indirect Rule" which left as much as possible of the administration in the hands of the chiefs as the "Native Authorities".[19] The Authorities were responsible for collection of taxes, a portion of which was retained in the "tribal treasury" for payment of staff and investment in the development of roads, wells, schools and health facilities as well as the provision of small loans

[15] Chipasha Luchembe, "Ethnic stereotypes, violence and labour in early colonial Zambia," in *Guardians in Their Time: Experiences of Zambians Under Colonial Rule 1890-1964*, ed. Samuel N Chipungu (London: MacMillan, 1992), 30-49.
[16] Henry S Meebelo, *Reaction to Colonialism. A Prelude to the Politics of Independence in Northern Zambia, 1893-1939, Etc* (Manchester: Published for the Institute for African Studies, University of Zambia by Manchester University Press., 1971), 87.
[17] Ibid., 89.
[18] Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 48-49.
[19] Davis *Modern Industry and the African*, 250-253.

for local enterprise. These resources were ultimately allotted by the chiefs, who also retained their traditional control over the, ever vital, access to land. Traditional African customs were retained, albeit in altered form, in as far as they were not "repugnant to 'natural justice' and morality".[20] Family matters, such as marriage and divorce, fell under the control of the Native Authorities and local chiefly courts. The Authorities were also responsible for a good deal that did not derive directly from African customary law, such as the issue of a wide range of permits and the collection of levies and fees introduced by the Protectorate government.[21] Indirect Rule thus gave chiefs considerable patronage and power.[22] This was enhanced by a number of government measures to bolster the authority of the chiefs and centralise their control over their communities.[23]

Nevertheless, Indirect Rule also generated some ambivalences. Daniel Posner notes that, far from being built up, traditional norms and institutions were often undermined.[24] The status of chiefs often came not from their traditional roles within society but from the power given to them as patrons and court magistrates under a system shaped for European administrative purposes. Even where the Government enhanced their authority within the African community it also placed strict limits on their real power. The Protectorate Administration was able to compel or revoke the binding orders of the Native Authority,[25] as well as placing limits on the matters over which the Authorities had jurisdiction and political competence, especially where Europeans were concerned. Moreover the British did not hesitate to interfere with African polit-

[20] Ibid., 254.
[21] Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 34-35, 45.
[22] Ibid., 33.
[23] Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 28; Lowe *et. al.* "Talking about "Tribe".
[24] Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 31.
[25] Davies *Modern Industry and the African*, 254.

ical relationships and structures. Chiefdoms were created where none previously existed. Hierarchies of chiefs, where one Authority became senior over others, were developed, even where there was no traditional acknowledgement of any relationship; several chiefdoms were amalgamated into one single Native Authority in the name of efficient administration. The government also interfered with the succession of chiefs, picking those who were most "progressive" or "competent".[26]

3.3.3 The Formation of Ethnic Identity

Posner argues that, taken together, the measures of Indirect Rule and the limitations on permanent urban residence had the effect of creating and strengthening allegiances between individuals and the ethnic community to which they were allotted. In order to be sure of obtaining the social and economic goods which the chiefs and their Native Authority administrations had within their gift it was necessary for people to cultivate and retain close relationships with the community, embracing and investing in their allegiance to ethnic groups.[27] This was as much the case for urban as for rural communities. While residential "locations" or compounds were not segregated, job allocation was usually made on the basis of a series of ethnic stereotypes.[28] Other mechanisms to provide opportunities for building ethnic affiliation were in place in the residential locations. Recreational activities and competitions, including traditional dances and songs, were often organised along group lines. Chiefs

[26] Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 253-255.
[27] Ibid., 40.
[28] Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 46; Luchembe, "Ethnic stereotypes, violence and labour in early colonial Zambia."

and village headmen were regularly invited to visit the locations, enabling them to exact tribute and remind their subjects of the affiliation which the urban worker had every reason to maintain in order to be sure of a secure retirement.[29]

Indirect Rule was informed by an ideology in which the imperial project was one of benevolent "trusteeship" exercised by the rulers on behalf of, and for the good of, the ruled, who were being slowly brought to the "light of civilization".[30] The institutions of Indirect Rule were to be an "instrument to meet the developing needs of Native society" and therefore of guiding them into "Modern Maturity".[31] Inevitably, Indirect Rule enhanced the identification of individuals with their tribe in as far as the tribe was to be a "self-determinate" or "semi-autonomous" entity in which the Chief exercised a role in which he had considerable power and patronage.[32] Posner provides compelling evidence to show that numbers claiming membership of those groups which had Native Authorities tended to increase as a percentage of the population, while those that did not tended to decline.[33] The logic of Indirect Rule together with the constraints of life in the towns offered every incentive and opportunity for the migrant worker to maintain his or her links with village and ethnic group, and to actively invest in the well-being of their communities of origin. That these incentives and opportunities were seized without hesitation by many is more or less incontrovertible.[34]

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29 Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 41-52.
30 Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 1990), 36-37, 47.
31 Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 41-52.
32 Davis, *Modern Industry and the African*, 251-252.
33 Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 36-40.
34 Ibid., 51.

Posner, however, makes a little too much of the effect of company and government policies. There is little doubt that African culture was reshaped by those government policies pursued for the sake of administrative efficiency, and that as a consequence ethnic allegiances were reshaped. The Europeans, however, did not create identities *ex nihilo*. Ethnic identities already existed and were already in a process of change and coalescence as a result of events which predated the European colonial enterprise, a process which government policy certainly encouraged and redirected.

3.3.4 Segregation

While Indirect Rule could be seen as something relatively benign, even beneficial, it could also be understood as encouraging segregation and a "soft" version of "separate development". There were places from which Africans were physically excluded except as servants. Africans were served separately in shops, often through windows or hatches. People lived in separate areas of the urban environments and had separate land tenure arrangements in the rural communities.[35] The constraints and incentives for Africans to invest in their ethnic identity contributed to this by creating separate legal systems, the one designated as superior and the other to uphold the first and be reshaped in its service. Africans were also excluded from participation in political life by the various combinations of educational and wealth qualifications limiting the franchise.

[35] Lamb, *The Africa House*, 311; Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 49; John V. Taylor, *Christians of the Copperbelt; The Growth of the Church in Northern Rhodesia.* (London: SCM, 1961).

However, this social and political exclusion lacked the theoretical foundation provided for Apartheid by Calvinism in South Africa and was at least theoretically intended to allow Africans to "progress" at their own pace. Settlers could deny imputations of racism by pointing out that the qualifications for the franchise applied to everyone and made no mention of race or colour. Thus racism was concealed under a cloak of benevolent paternalism which implied that one day Africans would be equal partners in a multi-racial society.[36] The sense of European superiority, the protections surrounding skilled employment and the restrictions on African social and economic advancement all determined that, as far as the European settlers were concerned, the "one day" would not be soon, "not in a thousand years".[37]

3.4 The Federation

The question of the relationship between African and European Settler in the Protectorate was at its most intense during the years of the Federation, and Zambia today celebrates this formative period of its nationhood in a range of public symbols. Settlers had long campaigned for "Responsible Government" which, it had been determined, would be best achieved as part of a federal entity to include Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The political circumstances for the creation of a federation were at

[36] Broomfield, G. W (General Secretary to UMCA) "*Last Chance in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland*". UMCA, London 1960. Book marked MMSL AF-SN 1237 in Box MMSL AF-SN 975-1410 SOAS Library Archives, University of London. He writes of the European settlers bringing prosperity and security to "large numbers of Africans" and of building a civilisation out of the wilderness.

[37] "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Obituary: Ian Smith," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1136865.stm (Accessed 12 August, 2009).

their most propitious following the Conservative Party victory in the British General Election in 1951. In March 1953, the House of Commons approved the creation of a federal entity, subject to a review after between seven and nine years.[38]

3.4.1 The Rise of African Nationalism

Africans were almost unanimously opposed to the Federation, fearing that their position would significantly worsen if they were deprived of their status under the Protectorate.[39] African protests, however, went unheard, or were put down to ignorance, propaganda and manipulation. As the 1960 review approached and was debated European commentators took up the concept of "partnership" and "common citizenship", written into the preamble of the Federal Constitution, albeit without clear definition,[40] as ideals and aspirations which were the only hope for the Federation.[41] The language of "partnership" was highly ambivalent. For some it expressed a genuine desire for a multi-racial society in which all should be equal; for others it meant European domination. It was in response to many such mixed messages that African Nationalism emerged, beginning with the "Welfare Association" at Mwenzo Mission.

The Mwenzo Welfare Association became a forum for expressing political grievances and making representation to the local administration on a wide variety of matters of community interest. It became a model for vibrant campaigns against discrim-

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38 Mulford, *Zambia*, 12-19.

39 Ibid., 9.

40 Greaves, *Last Chance in the Federation.* Notes that there are several ways of defining "Partnership", including to denote a form of Apartheid.

41 Both Greaves and Broomfield refer to these ideas. Greaves *Last Chance in the Federation* writes: "I know of no reasons to suppose that the desires of civilized African peoples are any different from those of any other democratic people" and thinks in terms of the franchise being extended as "increasing numbers [of Africans] qualify as responsible citizens".

ination and thus the cradle of Zambian nationalism.[42] Migrant workers from Northern Province spread the model, forming local Associations where they worked which gradually coalesced into a national political entity, the African National Congress (A.N.C.) with Harry Nkumbula as president.[43] Over time, support for the A.N.C. widened and it became more and more influential as a nationwide voice in opposition to the Federation.[44]

The first years of the Federation were relatively prosperous and the worst of African fears were not immediately realised. The A.N.C. lost its political way and underwent a deterioration characterised by inconsistent policies, bickering officials, and a widening breach with the trade unions.

The Federal Government introduced two Bills, the combined effect of which was to reduce African representation as a proportion of the Federal legislature. The African Affairs Board had retained theoretical power to reserve such legislation for consideration by the British Government. The Board declared the Bills "differentiating measures", but was overruled on both. Any African confidence in the future dissolved into a bleak vision of permanent subjugation in a European-dominated state and an appetite for militancy returned.[45] The A.N.C. had, however, lost much of its internal coherence and Kenneth Kaunda led a break-away faction to form the Zambian African National Congress (Z.A.N.C.).

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[42] Meebelo, *Reaction to Colonialism. A Prelude to the Politics of Independence in Northern Zambia, 1893-1939, Etc*, 240-245.
[43] Mulford, *Zambia*, 14, 17.
[44] Ibid., 22.
[45] Ibid., 62.

3.4.1.1 Zambian African National Congress

The new party was considerably more militant than the A.N.C., boycotting the 1959 elections in which a complex system of differentiated constituencies and a dual list franchise[46] gave Africans an element of participation without the prospect of real power. Popular opinion drifted towards Z.A.N.C. and consequently voter registration for these elections remained low.[47]

The election results clearly show how little influence the African vote had. Even in rural Special Constituencies, where the African vote, despite being discounted by the dual list system, was large enough to determine the outcome, European votes had disproportionate influence.[48] As the incumbent United Federal Party (U.F.P.) returned to untrammelled power Hastings Banda tartly expressed general African opinion: "Partnership has turned out so much whitewash".[49]

The Z.A.N.C. had been vindicated, and having been banned before the election, gained the addition of an aura of martyrdom. Opinion moved so far in a militant direction that even Nkumbula, the only A.N.C. victor, renounced moderation for a campaign of civil disobedience.[50] The government responded with emergency powers which enabled it to harass the Z.A.N.C. leadership. Kaunda was imprisoned and many others joined him.[51] Inevitably this situation could not last. Leaders jailed or "restricted" to rural areas had to be released, gaining the kudos of having suffered for the cause. The party remained intact and continued to grow.

[46] Lamb, *The Africa House*, 311.
[47] Mulford, *Zambia*, 91.
[48] Ibid., 99.
[49] Cited by *Greaves Last Chance in the Federation*. 7
[50] Mulford, *Zambia*, 111.
[51] Lamb, *The Africa House*, 310-311.

3.4.1.2 U.N.I.P.

Kaunda was released from prison to find the Z.A.N.C. metamorphosing into the United National Independence Party (U.N.I.P.).[52] Its main area of activity was along the "line of rail" to the north of Lusaka, the Copperbelt and in Bemba heartlands of Luapula and Northern Provinces from whence much of the Copperbelt labour force was drawn. In these areas the population was becoming steadily more militant. Extreme civil disobedience, including refusal to pay taxes and destruction of identity papers, was being proposed and the party led a highly successful boycott of the Federal Review (Monckton) Commission.[53] A variety of African civil organisations, including the naturally conservative Chiefs' Council, began to follow the U.N.I.P. lead.

The British Government began to accede to the pressure. Kaunda was invited to London for talks, and possibly for the Federal Review.[54] Kaunda arrived in London on 4th December 1960 and the Federal Review opened the following day. Progress was infinitesimal, with the settler parties attempting to frustrate any change to the constitution, the White Liberal group suggesting a five-year transition period and the Nationalists demanding majority rule immediately. Eventually the Federal Review was suspended in favour of seeking a resolution over the constitutional issue.

Negotiations continued throughout 1961 with a range of proposals offering various arrangements in an effort to create a balance of power between the Africans and the Settlers. The last of these, issued in June, effectively diminished the chances of the Nationalists winning upper roll support in the National constituencies and thus elim-

[52] Ibid., 131.
[53] Mulford, *Zambia*, 143-159.
[54] Ibid., 175-179.

inated the likelihood of an African majority in the Legislative Council. Kaunda was in a bitter and impatient mood and violence erupted in Zambia almost immediately and carried on throughout the (Zambian) winter.[55] Almost 3,000 people were convicted of a variety of offences. In September the turbulence ceased almost as suddenly as it had begun.

3.4.2 The End of the Federation

There were further political manoeuvres during the closing months of 1961. The Government eased the restrictions imposed on U.N.I.P. during the winter and the Governor resumed constitutional discussions, and it was now the Settlers turn to threaten chaos in the face of a steadily weakening position.[56]

A new constitution was published in March 1962 and the elections were set for October. Accepting this as a step towards independence both U.N.I.P. and the A.N.C. decided to contest the elections. The results show the depth of division between Settler and Nationalist communities. Any "middle ground" between the Settler and Nationalist aspirations had vanished. The small Liberal Party was effectively annihilated and disbanded shortly after the election, bequeathing its constituency to U.N.I.P. Even "middle class" Africans, whom one would expect to be a more moderate constituency, seemed to have supported the militant Nationalist agenda. [57]

[55] Lamb, *The Africa House*, 322.
[56] Mulford, *Zambia*, 231.
[57] Ibid., 265.

3.4.2.1.1 Reaching out to the Europeans

Despite the divisions, U.N.I.P. had been attempting to build support amongst the Settlers. The efforts were disrupted in the violence of 1961, but resumed with vigour during the 1962 Elections. Although Kaunda dropped none of his objectives, Europeans were invited to join in the building of a new Northern Rhodesia. He attended nightly multi-racial meetings and always spoke in reconciliatory terms of a genuine long term partnership in which the Settler community would always be welcome in Zambia because they were human beings with the same rights as Africans.[58]

U.N.I.P.'s efforts began to bear fruit. The party began to attract European members and a "floating vote" developed amongst Europeans.[59] In the elections of 1964 U.N.I.P. attracted 35.2% of the European vote and came within 120 votes of claiming the constituency of Ndola in the Copperbelt.[60]

3.4.2.1.2 Coalition Government

Following the 1962 elections the A.N.C. held the balance of power in the legislature. To ensure nationalist victory the A.N.C. and the U.N.I.P. needed to enter into a coalition. Nkumbula arrived together with Kaunda at the A.N.C. conference, held as by-election results to fill "frustrated" National seats were released,[61] and dramatically demanded "How many favour African Government? How many want African Gov-

[58] Ibid., 265-266.
[59] Ibid., 283.
[60] Ibid., 328.
[61] Special seats which could only be filled by a candidate gaining sufficient votes from both electoral rolls counted separately. Often these could not be filled on the first attempt as a candidate failed to gain the quota from one roll while commanding a majority in the other.

ernment now? How many are behind me?"[62] The answers were predictable, and, following intensive negotiations, Northern Rhodesia's first African Government came to power.

3.4.2.1.3 Constitutional Questions

Nkumbula was never deeply committed to the coalition, expressing the belief that it would not last. This meant that there was a real urgency about establishing a new constitution and holding yet more elections. A new constitution required that the question of the Lozi-speaking Kingdom of Barotseland be addressed. The Kingdom's well established distinctive identity derived from its separate Protectorate treaty. The Lozi King had supported the Federation and sought a separation from any future independent state.[63] His petitions were refused and the Kingdom became a reluctant, but integral part of Zambia. Prior to the elections of 1964 the Barotse government was reformed to make it more representative and elections were held to the Barotse National Council. The U.N.I.P. was popular with the younger and better educated Barotse, who saw the party as offering change in the face of a stifling traditionalist government dominated by old men and the U.N.I.P. won all the available seats.[64]

The constitution was more or less complete by September 1963 and the elections set for 20 and 21 January 1964. Under universal suffrage there was never any real doubt about the outcome. The main surprise was that the almost defunct A.N.C. actually won ten seats. The U.N.I.P., however, had won a significant majority and

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62 Ibid.

63 Owen J. M. Kalinga, "Independence Negotiations in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia.," *International Negotiation* 10, no. 2 (May 2005): 258.

64 Mulford, *Zambia*, 219, 228, 314.

Kaunda became Prime Minister. Yet another constitution, this time establishing the Republic of Zambia, was published, and on 24th October 1964, at midnight, Kaunda became the first Republican President.

3.4.3 Independent Zambia

The constitution of the new nation created centralised institutions and a potentially authoritarian government in which the President was both Head of Government and Head of State. The President appointed the Cabinet, which was selected from, but not responsible to, the National Assembly. The centralised government set about building a "centralised command economy", increasing educational spending, nationalising industry and creating the Industrial Development Corporation (INDECO) to lead industrial diversification. While copper prices were high the nation might be able to sustain a carefully managed necessary expenditure. All too often, however, INDECO projects were ill conceived and designed for political and ethnic gains rather than economic sustainability.[65] Kaunda's support for those opposing neighbouring white dominated regimes made further demands upon the exchequer. Military spending rose and traditional trade routes through Mozambique, Southern Rhodesia and South Africa closed, requiring considerable investment in new infrastructure.[66]

[65] Edem Djokotoe and Pamela Chama, *Show Me The Money* (Lusaka: Transparancy International Zambia, 2006), 52.
[66] Kaplan, *Zambia, a Country Study*, 42-43.

3.4.3.1.1 Fragmentation

Limited resources exacerbated ethnic rivalries and the collapse of the precarious relationship between Europeans and Africans which the U.N.I.P. had attempted to build prior to Independence was one of the first signs of fragmentation.[67] The alliance between the A.N.C. and the U.N.I.P. also did not last long. The A.N.C. became the opposition party in parliament, but the centralised nature of the state with its focus on the President in the dual roles of Head of State and Head of Government, gave rise to a confusion between state and government which made the concept of democratic opposition difficult to grasp. The A.N.C. were firmly tied to the Southern Province and the Tonga people. Few Tonga needed to join the migrant workforce in order to pay their taxes. Those who did migrate tended to travel to Southern Rhodesia and South Africa rather than to the Copperbelt.[68] The Lozi were entirely dependent upon migration south for industrial employment. Both the Lozi and the Tonga were, therefore, disaffected groups within Zambia, who were "losing out" as a result of the Government's foreign policy. The 1968 elections saw the A.N.C., which differed significantly in its approach to foreign policy, win a number of constituencies in the south and west, and come to articulate Tonga and Lozi disaffection in Parliament.[69]

Given these factors, it is easy to see how the A.N.C. became subject to accusations of tribalism and treason. The A.N.C. Leadership was arrested and its members were harassed, intimidated, and subjected to a range of restrictions. After 1968 the party

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67 Ibid., 50.

68 Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 77; Jan Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict* (Lewes: Julian Friedmann, 1974), 68.

69 Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict*, 66.

lost its recognition as the official opposition on the grounds that it did not have enough MPs.[70] Essentially a clear ethnic cleavage was developing between Tonga and Lozi speakers and groups in the North and North-East.[71]

3.4.3.1.2 The One Party State

The U.N.I.P. originated in the North and North-East of Zambia, amongst CiBemba speaking peoples Many Bemba migrated to the Copperbelt mines, making the Province a *de facto* Bemba speaking region.[72] The U.N.I.P. found these urban Bemba speakers a ready force for agitation and strikes in pursuit of independence, and their continued support became essential for stability in copper dependent Zambia. As a consequence, the U.N.I.P. was often identified as a "Bemba" party.

The Bemba speakers within the post-Independence party were, however, inclined to be dissatisfied with their share of the spoils of victory. Kaunda paid careful attention to the balance of his cabinets and the Bemba perceived themselves as under-represented at the centre of power. One time Vice-President, Simon Kapwepwe, defected in 1970, citing "Bemba sufferings and victimisation", to form his own United Progressive (Party U.P.P.) which quickly gained support in the Bemba speaking provinces, which formed the U.N.I.P. heartland.[73] The new party was eventually banned, and Kapwepwe was detained as "a tool of neo-colonialist forces" and an "agent of Southern African régimes" as well as even more unlikely accusations.[74]

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70 Ibid., 67.
71 Kaplan, *Zambia, a Country Study*, 38.
72 Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 72-75.
73 Michael. Bratton, "Zambia Starts Over," *Journal of Democracy* 3, no. 2 (1992): 83.
74 Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict*, 62.

There was extreme tension, both within the U.N.I.P. and nationally, following the banning of the U.P.P.. The U.N.I.P. sought to resolve the tension by creating a new constitution establishing Zambia as a "one party participatory democracy". The "Second Republic" came into being in 1973.

The one-party state, however, solved little in the way of either ethnic tension or economic problems. Oil prices rose dramatically after 1973 and income from copper fell. Agricultural production, although left largely in private hands, had declined, leaving Zambia reliant upon food imports through the 60s and 70s.[75] Like many other African countries, Zambia borrowed heavily, with devastating results. Soon the debt was beyond realistic repayment.[76]

The IMF imposed a "Structural Adjustment" in 1983 which obliged the Government to remove subsidies from food staples, but this was continually blocked by protests from students and the urban poor.[77] Tensions within the nation rose steadily and Kaunda resorted to manipulation and repression.[78]

3.4.3.1.3 The M.M.D. and the return to a multi-party state

In July 1990 the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (M.M.D.) was formed out of a variety of disaffected business and trade-union groups to campaign for the restoration of a multi-party democracy. Kaunda was eventually forced to concede to a multi-party election and to accept independent international electoral monitors. Elections

[75] Martin Meredith, *The State of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence* (London: Free Press, 2006), 282.
[76] Lishala C. Situmbeko and Jack Jones Zulu, "Zambia: Condemned to Debt," PDF object, *zambia01042004.pdf*, April 2004, 7, http://www.wdm.org.uk/resources/reports/debt/zambia01042004.pdf (Accessed 21 January, 2009). Accessed 12 January 2009.
[77] Ibid., 21.
[78] Meredith, *The State of Africa*, 381.

were held in October 1991, and the M.M.D., lead by Frederick Chiluba, duly won a massive victory both in the parliamentary and presidential contests. Kaunda, in a move almost unprecedented in Africa, conceded defeat.[79]

During the campaign to oust Kaunda both Chiluba and Kaunda appealed to Christian sentiment. Kaunda presented himself as a "Christian Gentleman".[80] He had, however, flirted with what he called "Humanism" and "Indian spirituality". Chiluba was perceived to be a committed member of the United Church of Zambia, he claimed to have had a conversion experience and to have received the gift of tongues. He gained a good deal of Christian support, especially from the "evangelical" groups. Once victorious, Chiluba felt he had to make a "pay-off" to these supporters, and two months after the elections he declared Zambia to be a "Christian Nation".[81]

The declaration was enthusiastically welcomed by the evangelical groups. The mainstream churches however, were a good deal more ambivalent, welcoming the idea that government should be conducted according to the highest of Christian standards and principles, but wary of anything that might compromise the secular nature of the state.[82]

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79 Ibid., 406.
80 Gifford, *African Christianity*, 191.
81 Ibid., 198.
82 Ibid., 199.

3.4.3.1.4 Chiluba's Presidency

The aura of Christianity did little to disguise the consequences of Chiluba's economic policy, which was based on fulfilling IMF conditions and structural adjustment programmes. Import tax regimes were liberalised and overall government spending reduced with disastrous results. Formal employment in all sectors collapsed.[83]

The Government's records on financial probity and transparency were no better. Many believed that the new Government included a number of corrupt ministers from the past.[84] The irregularities, scandals and blatant corruption attending many of the Government's programmes, most especially the Presidential Housing Initiative, did nothing to dispel this view.[85]

The dangers of the "Christian Nation" soon became apparent. It became briefly fashionable for Chiluba to be presented as God's chosen President and, consequently, opposition to him was viewed as opposition to God.[86] Chiluba invited North American "tele-evangelists" to conduct highly dubious "miracle crusades" and revivals; by eliciting their support and approval, he gained a semblance of credibility and international legitimation for his re-election campaign.[87] Paranoia and intolerance of opposition soon became hallmarks of Chiluba's presidency in much the same way as they were of Kaunda's. Plots and coup attempts abounded. The Constitution was altered in

[83] Situmbeko and Zulu, "Zambia Condemned to Debt," 31, 33.
[84] Gifford "African Christianity", 182.
[85] Djokotoe and Chama, *Show Me The Money*, xiv.
[86] Gifford, *African Christianity*, 202.
[87] Ibid., 203-204.

order to exclude Kaunda as a candidate in advance of the 1996 elections and efforts were made to deport not only Kaunda, but also a number of other leading political opponents.[88]

In 1998 Chiluba was behind yet another campaign to alter the constitution, this time to allow him a "third term" as President. In April 2001 the Party Conference voted to nominate him as its presidential candidate. The party fragmented, and 43 M.M.D. Members of Parliament, including cabinet ministers, joined Opposition members in pledging to uphold the Constitution.[89] By early May the opposition, both in Parliament and throughout the country, was so intense that Chiluba publicly abandoned the third-term bid in an exchange for a pivotal role in the nomination of his successor, Levy Patrick Mwanawasa. This led to further fragmentation and the abrupt and noisy departure of Chiluba's former "fixer", Michael Sata, to establish his own Patriotic Front Party.

Many believed Mwanawasa would be no more than Chiluba's puppet. This, however, appears not to be the case. Chiluba's immunity from prosecution as a former Head of State was removed at Mwanwasa's instigation and he (Chiluba) was prosecuted on several counts of corruption both in Zambia and in London.[90]

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88 Whitaker, "Citizens and Foreigners."

89 *Post* 3rd April 2001. Front Page

90 "World Briefing | Africa: Zambia: Ex-President Loses Immunity - New York Times," July 17, 2002, http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C0DE2DE1239F934A25754C0A9649C8B63&scp=1&sq=Africa:%20Zambia:%20Ex-President%20Loses%20Immunity%20July%20&st=cse (Accessed 26 January, 2009); "World Briefing | Africa: Zambia: Ex-President Told To Repay Stolen Millions - New York Times," Mqy 5, 2007, http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9D02E2D6113E-F936A35756C0A9619C8B63 (Accessed 26 January, 2009).

3.4.4 Some Conclusions

A number of conclusions can be derived from the foregoing account of Zambia's formation. Firstly, we have seen that there were a number of ethnic identities already existing in the territory. Some of these were already becoming more clearly-defined before the Europeans arrived. They had also begun to attract the allegiance of other culturally similar groups who were seeking alliances to secure themselves in the face of significant external threats. The Company and British Administrations, through the mechanisms of Indirect Rule, created the circumstances in which this process continued and accelerated, despite increasing urbanisation and industrialisation through which ethnic identity might be expected to weaken.

Secondly, we have seen that during the same period contact with and subjugation to the European colonial power also created the circumstances in which a new "national" identity could be formed, particularly in the midst of the conflict over the Federation. This identity appears to have been fragile, and it began to unravel as soon as Independence had been gained, fragmenting into a number of rival factions defined, at least in the main part, by ethnic affiliation. In attempting to contain the tensions created by this unravelling the ruling party instigated a one party state.

Thirdly, we have observed that while the one-party state changed the parameters of the ethnic conflict to some extent, it failed to address any of the underlying causes of conflict, and the Party and its President were eventually removed from power, to be replaced by the M.M.D. The M.M.D. was created to achieve this end. While it was able to mobilise large numbers and, temporarily, to transcend ethnic identities, it too

has proved to be a fragile coalition, with a number of its leading members abruptly departing to join or to form opposition parties as the internal competition for power and its financial benefits intensified. We have not yet established whether the resulting competing factions have an ethnic basis; this matter will be investigated in a later chapter.

Finally we have seen that the M.M.D. has shown as little understanding of the concept of “loyal opposition” as the U.N.I.P. It has repeated the U.N.I.P.'s authoritarianism, and has been just as profoundly incapable of dealing with even the most constructive criticism. Neither has it been able to address the underlying causes of tension and conflict. Zambia, therefore, remains in a deeply conflicted state.

The story has been told, and the scene set. We have yet to achieve any real insight into how competing ethnic identities coalesced into a single national identity. We must now analyse the foregoing historical material to achieve an insight into how the conflicts of the past have shaped both ethnic and national identity. This will be carried out over the next three chapters, drawing upon the insights of René Girard.

4 The Identity of A Nation

In the last chapter we recounted something of the story of the creation of the nation of Zambia. From this story it is clear that the “national” identity of Zambia has been constructed relatively recently. Prior to the arrival of the British, the territory was occupied by disparate and scattered Bantu groups with their own agendas and relationships. There was nothing which could be thought of as a political or historical precursor to Zambia and no identity held in common to which the various African groups could subscribe. This raises the question to which this chapter is addressed, why is there a nation called Zambia, despite the clear evidence for ethnic divisions in the nation? The question becomes more vital when we consider two further facts. First the policies adopted by the Protectorate Government and the mining companies ensured that ethnic identity was driven along a specific path of clarification and coalescence. Second, neither the multi-party states nor the one-party state of post-independence Zambia have successfully established a truly unified nation state.

Clearly, the only heritage which the nation as an entity can claim is that of the Protectorate. If we are to understand why Zambia came into, and remains in, existence in spite of its divided self, then it is the colonial period which we must consider. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to explain the emergence of the nation of Zambia. drawing upon the theory of René Girard.

Girard's thesis is that identity, whether communal or individual, is formed out of desire, which is never desire as such, but always desire which is mediated by a model. Identity emerges as desires coincide and the imitator and the model aspire to the

same "object of desire" and engage in mimetic rivalry. The central focus of the conflict moves from the object to the rivals as each seeks "kudos": the unanswerable power to finally displace and exclude the other with such effect that there is no possible response. As this phase, or "moment", of the conflict progresses, distinctions between the rivals collapse, and the phenomenon of "mimetic doubling" occurs, in which the patterns and actions of one become replicated by the other so that each rival becomes a mirror image of the other. The doubled rivals do not occupy the same place in the pattern at the same time, but each takes the same position in succession.

> The quicker the rhythm of reprisals, the shorter the wait. The faster the blows rain down, the clearer it becomes that there is no difference between those who strike the blows and those who receive them. On both sides everything is equal; not only the desire, the violence, the strategy, but also the alternation of victory and defeat, of exaltation and despair.[1]

4.1 Internal and External Mediation

Girard argues that desire can be mediated in two main ways: externally and internally. In external mediation, the model is at sufficient "distance" that direct rivalry becomes impossible. The usual literary example is that of Don Quixote, who seeks to imitate Amadis of Gaul, the "perfect knight". As Amadis is a fictional figure Quixote can imitate his chivalry without direct conflict arising, because he and Amadis can never become rivals for the same object.

External mediation can also take place where the symbolic distance between the model and imitator is sufficient to prevent direct rivalry. Social distinctions, class, prestige, power, wealth: all are barriers to direct conflictual rivalry while permitting

[1] Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 158.

some level of mimesis.[2] A small child, for example, is so entirely dependent upon its parents that any conflictual mimesis is soon suppressed. Social institutions which maintain the distinctions between groups, classes or individuals or maintain hierarchy and social order create symbolic distances by making it seem impossible for the imitator to attain to the position of the model. This reduces the danger of mimesis sliding into direct confrontation.

Internal mediation occurs when the social or symbolic separation between the model and the imitator is reduced. The latter is more capable of attaining the object of desire, permitting the two to become rivals. At the very core of this internal mediation is the "double bind" of "imitate me/do not imitate me". As each seeks to resist the mimesis of the other the struggle for mimetic identification grows more intense, doubling occurs, and finally a collapse into a catharsis through which some form of harmonious identity is established as a result of the expulsion of the victim.

It is usual for forms of mimesis to change as the social and symbolic distance between the model and the imitator changes. The symbolic distance between the small child and its parents are too great for conflictual mimesis. As the child grows, however, the disparities in power within the relationship reduce and conflictual mimesis develops. All parents know the "negative phase" of early childhood and the fraught and conflicted relationships with teenage children, phases which form part of the pattern of identification and expulsion through which identity develops.[3]

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2 Fleming, *René Girard*, 17-18.
3 Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 30.

In our effort to understand the emergence of Zambia from the Protectorate of Northern Rhodesia we shall seek to examine the history, which we have already recounted, for evidence of these patterns of mimesis rivalry, doubling and catharsis. This will allow us both to test the effectiveness of our interpretative tool and, should our tool prove effective, to come to some conclusions concerning the origin of Zambia as a nation and of its national identity. We will first examine the emerging identities of both the Settler and the African populations, seeking the points at which they interacted in conflict with one another and with the British Colonial Office, and seek to show that it is the relationships conflictual mimesis which caused these identities to emerge.

4.2 Conflict and Identities in Northern Rhodesia

4.2.1 European Identity and Africans: Land Rights

The historical evidence indicates that a complex multi-dimensional pattern of rivalry amongst Africans, between Arabs and Africans, amongst European powers, and between Arabs and Europeans and Africans and Europeans generated what is often known as the "Scramble For Africa" which led to a British colonial rule in Southern and Central Africa. This scramble to acquire and occupy African territory was born less out of a desire to have African colonies as such, than out of the rivalries between the European powers. British Governments became entrapped in a spiral of territorial seizures, which expanded the boundaries of their southern African acquisition ever northwards in a quest for "security" for what was intended to be little more than a re-provisioning station for shipping between the Far East and Britain.[4] Each of

[4] Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag*, 42-43.

the conflicting powers wanted what the other desired without either being sure of its "intrinsic value".[5] The Scramble can therefore be understood as a mimetic rivalry focused initially upon control of territory, so that others could be prevented from gaining control of it. As the European powers were intent upon validating their control before both their own and other European eyes, the Scramble became a race to acquire a network of dubious treaties and concessions from African leaders.[6] There was, of course, only a passing semblance of legality to this. The treaties and concessions were shadowy instruments designed to provide, often morally very dubious, European interests with sufficient pretext to establish or at least claim "effective occupation" and ensure territory fell into their specific "sphere of influence" rather than that of another nation. If the African leaders soon had doubts about the extent and meaning of what they had given to the representatives of the European commercial and government interests they found just as soon that they could not regain their control. The legal niceties of treaties and concessions were designed to displace African as well as other European powers from their claims to control of territory.

As European Settlers arrived in Northern Rhodesia they were quickly drawn into their own locally specific set of rivalries with the African population on the one hand, and the British Foreign and Colonial Office on the other. These were a mimetic representation of the larger national rivalries. The Settlers had been lured into the colonial project by the offer of land and/or business opportunities predicated upon the B.S.A.C.'s claim to control the land on the basis of the same dubious grants and treaties which established "effective occupation". The whole colonial project therefore in-

5 Ibid., 45.
6 Blake, *A History of Rhodesia*, 76.

evitably entrapped the Settlers in a mimetic rivalry for a desired good: possession of the land. This rivalry was not so much between rival groups of Settlers, as between Settlers as a group and the African population who were perceived to be in possession of the land.

The nature of this as a purely mimetic rivalry becomes clear when we examine the population density of the Protectorate. The Davis Survey estimated the usable land area of the Northern Rhodesian Protectorate as 288,400 square miles with a total population in 1931 of 1,295,081 Africans and 13,846 Whites.[7] Despite the uneven quality of the land and the disadvantages imposed by climate and environment this can hardly be a recipe for overcrowding. Colonisation was slow, "[T]he anticipated white-settler farmers failed to arrive and the vacated lands remained silent."[8] Those Settlers that did come to Northern Rhodesia bought the land at astonishingly low rates.[9] Yet the historical records show an unrelenting thirst for land to be expropriated and allocated for European use. In order to legitimate their possession the Settlers adopted stereotypes of African land use. They viewed the land as grossly under-utilised and crying out for proper development. African agricultural methods were regarded as inefficient and incapable of producing sufficient surplus for a modern industrial economy. They also adopted the racist stereotypes similar to those elsewhere in the region:

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7 Davis, *Modern Industry and the African*, 33 The area of Zambia is usually put at slightly over 290,000 square miles. Davis deducts an amout for unusable land and lakes.

8 Musambachime, "Colonialism and The Environment," 18.

9 Lamb, *The Africa House*, 64-65 Gore-Brown bought land at 1 shilling an acre.

> This attitude included some gratuitous assumptions, to wit: that the Natives were more prolific than Whites; that they were measurably immune from the diseases of the districts; that they were a menace to national security; that they were potential competitors who, if given the White man's advantages, might presently repossess the land, and that with a little skill and education they become "cheeky" and difficult to control.[10]

Europeans clearly saw the Africans as a threat to their possession of what were (and still are) vast tracts of nearly empty land and ultimately to "national security", in crude terms a people seeking to out-breed and displace them.[11] They projected onto their African rivals the identity of rebellious and "cheeky" "children" seeking to usurp their parental authority. They were concerned to ensure that their displacement of the Africans was permanent, arguing that allocating more land for African usage, in effect returning some expropriated land, would be "wasteful and a challenge to White supremacy".[12]

We can immediately recognize one of Girard's insights: conflictual mimesis arises out of the relationship between the rivals and not necessarily from any scarcity in the objects which are mutually desired, although scarcity may intensify or exacerbate the rivalry. It is the mediation itself that engenders conflictual mimesis, irrespective of the object.[13] The Company had expropriated the most fertile land and moved the African population to considerably less desirable "reserves", not because land was in short supply or of any great intrinsic value, but from desire rooted in the mimesis: the mediated desire for an object because others either possessed it or desired it or even seemed to possess or desire it.

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[10] Davis, *Modern Industry and the African*, 100.
[11] An ancient form of stereotyping: compare this with Exodus 1:9
[12] Davis, *Modern Industry and the African*, 100.
[13] Fleming, *René Girard*, 19.

4.2.2 European Identity and The Colonial Government

The British and colonial Governments were, despite the appeals of the Settler community, persuaded by 1934 that allocating more land to Africans was a necessity. Land was acquired from the North Charterland Concession Company as crown land and in 1946 a commission insisted that no further land should be allocated for European settlement, at least until that which had already been allocated had been taken up. The commission also argued that Africans already resident upon crown land should not be forced to move.[14] The unease of the Europeans generated by these two moves was exacerbated by the fact that Northern Rhodesia was not technically a colony, but rather a "Protectorate", which meant that, while the Settlers could influence the Governor through representatives elected to a council, they could not formally drive policy through an elected government, nor could Africans be forced into making further concessions without at least the passing semblance of negotiation.[15] The protections might well be more theoretical than real, but they were, in Settler minds, irksome restrictions on their "rights" and supremacy in the region. The concerns of the settlers were further intensified in 1930 by the Passfield Memorandum. This declared African needs to be "paramount" in the Protectorate.[16] Taken together the Passfield doctrine and the moratorium on land expropriation left the Settlers feeling that the Government was paying little attention to their needs.

[14] Musambachime, "Colonialism and The Environment," 20.
[15] David Armine Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam. [On the Removal of the Tonga Tribesmen from the Site of the Kariba Dam.]* (London,: Collins, 1961), 73-74.
[16] Mulford, *Zambia*, 7.

In response the Settlers sought for themselves what was designated as "desirable" and had been given to, or won by, both the British domestic population and European Settler communities elsewhere: representative democratic self-government. British and British Dominion societies in Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada became models for the Settlers who through a mimesis of these societies sought to build Western "democratic civilisation" in Africa, through which they would gain determinative power over their own communal life. This would mean that the Governor would become a figurehead representing a distant and largely impotent Crown, and the local civil service would be directed by a local parliament filling the role of the Crown in British society and the governors of other Dominion states. The Settlers wished in effect to become not just "like" the model through what they saw as an accountable form of government, but to "become" the model, become the governing power in a new state through "Responsible Government" which effectively displaced the Governor and Colonial Office, relegating the Governor to a ceremonial symbol.[17]

The British Government, motivated by the ideology of high imperialism, was reluctant to grant the Settlers independence to the overt detriment of a sense of trusteeship.[18] The Settlers were therefore blocked by their model. The Settlers, however, did not find it easy to enter into a direct confrontation with the Government. In order to assert their claims to the land, the Settlers needed to maintain a sense of cultural difference and superiority: to consider themselves as Europeans rather than as Africans. Without the ideological support which gave rise to Apartheid, the Settlers in Northern Rhodesia needed the legitimation provided by the British Government's claims

[17] Lamb, *The Africa House*, 252 Gore-Brown wrote to his aunt "I thought if we could get the place out of the hands of the colonial government, we could really make it tick".
[18] Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict*, 11-12.

upon the territory based upon the treaties and concessions. Without this their position in the Protectorate would have been a good deal more tenuous. The Settlers could not therefore, at that time, directly oppose either the British Government, upon whose policy they had very little direct influence, or the Governor and his council upon which Settler representatives sat by constitutional grant, without fundamentally undermining the whole institutional structure which embodied their self-ascription.

As the symbolic distances between the Governor and the British Government on the one hand and the Settlers on the other were too great for the Settlers to be able to enter into a direct conflictual mimesis the Settlers were left instead with the African population, whose status as British protected persons was a matter of some irritation, as a target for projection in this frustrated and frustrating conflict.[19] As a tiny minority in an African territory the Settlers could not but perceive that anything which reduced the distinctions between themselves and the African community would sooner or later mean that the Settler community would be disadvantaged and eventually disappear.[20] "Responsible Government" therefore meant "for Europeans only" and any drive to self-government on behalf of the Settlers was equally a drive to exclude Africans. The African was to be "a wage-earner - a labour force to be exploited. He is to be a serf dependent upon the goodwill of his employer. There should be no technical education, no contact with the world of new ideas, no modern methods deliberately provided for him".[21]

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[19] Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder*, 14-41 argues that a similar mechanism played a role in the presecution of the Jews in early modern Europe.
[20] Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict*, 12.
[21] Davis, *Modern Industry and the African*, 105.

The Settlers were therefore in conflict on two fronts over self-determination and land possession. This created and maintained a distinction between themselves and the Colonial Office as represented by the Governor on the one hand and the African community on the other hand. The conflict with the Government being projected upon the African community and enhanced the impetus to maintain the distinctions between themselves and the African population. There was no sense of "common cause" between Settler and African population against the Government. Africans were opposed to the Federation on the grounds that they feared that Settler rule would place them in a significantly worse position than their status as British protected persons had allowed them, and as we have argued, the drive for self-government on the part of the Settlers was a drive to exclude Africans. Only as the crisis out of which Zambia was created reached its climax did a temporary realignment become possible.

The creation of the Federation did nothing to alleviate the tensions either between the Settlers and the Government or between the Settlers and the African population. On the one hand, the territory remained a Protectorate and the Colonial Office retained some rights of supervision over the Government which set irksome, if only symbolic and theoretical, limits upon local and Federal Government. On the other hand, the Settler communities in all the countries of the Federation were given more political power to determine the course of the new entity, and more leverage and influence over the British Government and less interference from the Governor and Colonial Office. This reduced the symbolic distance between themselves and the Government, intensifying the conflict between them, driving the Settlers' campaign

for the transformation of the Federation into a self-governing Dominion similar to Canada or Australia. This in turn intensified the conflict with the African population. Both the British Government and the African population were to be effectively excluded in the proposed dominion.

The symbolic distances between the Setters and their rivals were reduced through the social and political changes which took place both in the Protectorate and elsewhere. The mediation of desire moved from "external" to "internal" in character. Tensions and rivalry therefore increased through the entire history of Northern Rhodesia until the mimetic crisis occurred, generating significant fluidity in identity and shifts in allegiances which allowed a coalition "of all against one" through which the nation came into being.

The Settlers took on an identity that could only have emerged as a result of these conflicted relationships. This was quite clearly a new communal identity whereby the European population identified itself, and was identified, as a distinctive community within Northern Rhodesia. It is true that Settlers were European, and were no more of a *tabula rasa* than the African communities they came to dominate. Nevertheless, the Settlers became, in the conflicted relationships of Northern Rhodesia, a new and quite distinctive community which was neither entirely European nor African. In origin the Settlers were almost as diverse in their ethnicity as the African communities, some were Irish, others Greek, Polish, Italian or Afrikaner, some distinctly "working class" others of more aristocratic background. This wide range of differing social and ethnic groups might otherwise have despised one another, but in Northern Rhodesia they became one "community" with a common identity to which all could subscribe.

The identity that bound, and continues to bind, such a disparate group together as one coherent community was formed as an identity "over against" both the Colonial power and the African population, in short by mimetic rivalry with, and exclusion of, both Africans and Government.

4.2.3 African Nationalist Identity

4.2.3.1 External Mediation in African-European Relations

In the earliest encounters between Africans and the encroaching European power there was a stage when Europeans were both physically and symbolically distant. The first Europeans to settle in the region were isolated missionaries, such as Moffat and Livingstone. They provided models for alternative life styles and world views, but were scattered, with limited influence, and, given their missionary intentions, less likely to immediately become obstacles to African mimesis. They thus posed little direct cause for conflictual mimesis. Until the arrival of the "Pioneer Column", European presence remained a very distant influence upon many of the peoples of the region, although their gradual encroachment upon those African societies between the Limpopo and the Zambezi, where there had been more direct contact, elicited ambivalent responses.[22]

[22] Blake, *A History of Rhodesia*, 55-60.

Even as the settlement began in earnest Northern Rhodesia's Europeans still remained at a distance to many Africans.

> By reason of the backwardness of his culture the Native had found it hard to compete with the White invader, and harder still to adopt the new culture or harmonise it with his own. This continuous disability has farther increased the social distance between him and the White man. Thus it became easy for him to accept the White man's definition of his inferior status and satisfactorily to rationalise his position. So that through the earlier stages of the contact, before the opening of the present century, the White man and his ways were measurably sacrosanct. The changes in Native civilisation which took place were incidental and mainly resulted from unconscious imitation.[23]

Davies and his team may well use complacent and paternalistic language, but they offer clear evidence of "external mediation" during the primary stages of European settlement. The Europeans were for the Africans at a "symbolic" distance because of the disparities in technical and military power. It was impossible to integrate the late 19th and early 20 century invaders into African cultural paradigms in the way that had occurred with earlier European incursions or contact with Arab cultures, which had been met on more equal terms and had remained a somewhat scattered and less pressing influence. The symbolic distance in the relationship both produced, and was the outcome of, an element of submissiveness on the part of the Africans and of paternalism on the part of the Europeans. Africans accepted, because they had been psychologically overwhelmed, the superiority of European culture, and although, by virtue of the technical power wielded by Europeans, European culture became a model, African culture had little ability to either assimilate or be assimilated by it. African mimesis of European culture was consequently sporadic and distant, and could not therefore generate any immediate rivalry.

[23] Davis, *Modern Industry and the African*, 88-89.

4.2.3.2 Internal Mediation

As an industrial economy emerged Europeans became more numerous and Africans entered the domestic and industrial workforce. The encounter between African and European became more frequent, more constant and more intimate. Africans began to work in close proximity with their European pit bosses and mine captains, farm managers and family members. The distance between African and Europeans closed and mimesis steadily became more immediate.[24] Africans learnt, through mimesis, to acquire more and more of those aspects of European culture designated as desirable by their model. In the process they also learnt to become impatient with their social and economic position.

> It was in this latter period that the Native discovered that the White man had feet of clay. Resentment, irks and grievances against White injustice, real or fancied, gradually replaced his blind admiration. Occasionally these complaints were overtly expressed. More frequently they were masked by a smiling face and an exaggeratedly polite demeanour, or were studiously repressed only to be aired among his own people in the kraal, township or location.[25]

The transition from external to internal mediation was not a sudden leap, but rather a slow slide through a spectrum. The emergence of conflictual mimesis took place gradually. While symbolic distance was still significant, expressions of open rivalry were restrained. As the gap closed rivalry intensified and became more openly expressed.

[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid., 89.

The African industrial labour force was most aware of the disparities between themselves and Europeans. Their contacts with Europeans were the most intense and prolonged. They were also amongst those most likely to undergo any significant European training or education in preparation for their work in the mines and thus most likely to be influenced by new ideas. They were certainly aware of the disparities of rewards between themselves and their European bosses. Robert Rotberg, introducing the second edition of the Davis Survey, wrote:

> They [Africans] believed themselves badly paid, particularly in comparison to the wages received by the whites with whom they worked .... Africans disliked the supposedly inferior houses to which they were assigned, and complained of primitive sanitary arrangements. In their eyes conditions of employment, particularly underground, were considerably less than ideal.[26]

While people living in rural communities might be thought to have been slower to close the social distance, being less likely to find themselves in direct contact with Europeans, those returning at the end of their contracts and those who had been educated in mission training schools soon brought a sense of disaffection with them. Through time, the symbolic distances reduced, and rivalry between Africans and Europeans became more intense and more openly expressed by Africans through the Welfare Associations and African Trades Unions, themselves products of the closing of the symbolic distance between Africans and Europeans and generators of conflict.

[26] Ibid., x.

4.3 The Double-Bind

The core of mimetic rivalry, according to Girard's thesis, is the “double-bind”.

> Man cannot respond to that universal human injunction, “Imitate me!” without almost immediately encountering an inexplicable counterorder: “Don't imitate me!” (which really means, “do not appropriate *my* object). This second command fills man with despair and turns him into the slave of an involuntary tyrant. Man and his desirers thus perpetually transmit contradictory signals to one another. Neither model nor disciple really understands why one constantly thwarts the other because neither perceives that his desire has become the reflection of the other's.[27]

Far from being confined to the area of pathological psychology the double-bind is a very common element in human development, “so common that it might be said to form the basis of all human relationships”.[28] The model issues the invitation to “Imitate me!” and, because the model, in his or her power, appears to hold the secret of “true being”, this invitation is profoundly seductive. Yet at the same time there is a rebuff. The imitation is rejected and the acquisition of the “secret of true being” is forbidden. The closer the disciple comes to the model, the more powerful the forbidding injunction and the more intense the conflict.[29]

We should therefore expect that African-European relations were formed by a complex nexus of interrelated double-binds, in which the Europeans both encouraged Africans to take on elements of European culture and practice while at the same time

[27] Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 147.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid., 148.

posing obstacles in the way of African acquisition of desirable aspects of that same culture.[30] While this double-bind mechanism can be seen to have affected African-European relationships throughout the whole range of social interactions, there are two very clear examples of its action: the questions of African education and African political rights.

4.3.1.1 Education and The Double Bind

Education was of considerable concern to the mission agencies, and forms a constant thread through many of their minutes and reports. For the missionaries the most satisfactory education was carried out in residential institutions.[31] Typical memorabilia from such institutions suggest an atmosphere imitative of that of a British boarding school, with its school magazine, societies, houses and inter-house competitions.[32] Speaking African languages was discouraged, and the adoption of English as a medium of communication, of Western values and of British culture was encouraged. The missions in particular offered both primary and more advanced education, so that Africans themselves could become teachers and evangelists; models for the next generation to imitate and equal participants in the mission of the church. The Government too was, at least theoretically, committed to education, the aim of which was to enable Africans to become equal participants in an increasingly non-racial state.[33] Education grew both in terms of quantity and quality from the end of the 1930s, with

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30 Rural Africans were encouraged, for example to farm in a European manner, but forbidden to hunt with guns. Musambachime, "Colonialism and The Environment," 14.

31 The UMCB, for example was regularly concerned with education, and often sought missionaries who were educationalists. Mission Minutes record that 18 certified primary teachers were needed but could not be found in January 1937 box CBMS A\T\7.2|290 SOAS Library University of London

32 Memorabilia from Waddilove and Tegwani Schools, box MMSL AF-ZI 1045. SOAS Library, University of London .

33 Greaves, *Last Chance in the Federation* 3.

both Government and mining companies issuing newspapers and magazines intended for a literate African readership.[34] Education, even in one of the local languages chosen as the media for African education by the Government, had its rewards. It opened the door to civil service or administrative jobs which, even if less well paid than the more senior posts occupied by Europeans, offered a much higher standard of living than that offered by subsistence farming.[35] Through the process of education Africans were enjoined to become "civilised", at least according to European definitions of "civilised"; invited by their European teachers to "be like me". At the same time the "colour bar" imposed by Europeans ensured that Africans did not enjoy the full benefits of becoming urban, "civilised" and educated, something which urban Africans were well aware of and resented deeply.[36]

The narrower the difference between African and European, the more intense the rivalry and the more Europeans were determined to exclude the African from all the benefits promised by education. Africans felt in turn a sense of "disappointment"; a sense of promises broken and advancement blocked. This is expressed a number of times in the evidence given to Davis and his colleagues during their survey:

> My education has been a disappointment to me. Although I hold a certificate such as is possessed by a White man, yet I am not paid at the same rate, and further, a half-cast is paid better than myself or any of my group qualified in that way. The average White man in his dealings with my group is unable to understand that there are those of my race who are already his equals, and thus in his treatment of the Black man he becomes impatient, unfair and lacks an understanding of him.[37]

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34 Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 65-66.
35 Ibid., 82-83.
36 Davis, *Modern Industry and the African*, 88-89.
37 Ibid., 92.

The respondent's evidence shows that stereotyping by Europeans prevented Africans, no matter how well educated, from ever being treated as equals, thus generating the "double bind". No matter how well educated, what certificates and experience the African respondent held, he could not, under any circumstances, aspire to "be like" a European in economic reward or social status. The theme of disappointment recurs in other evidence:

> I am disappointed with my education when I consider the energy and time and patience I spent to get it .... and yet after all these years of labour and hard work I am offered a salary which is anything but adequate. As an enlightened man I am supposed to live a clean, decent, hygienic life, eating a variety of foods suitable and wholesome, wearing neat, fairly attractive clothes and living in a furnished home....But the White man in this country, including a great number of good missionaries, is out for White superiority. They know that the best way of keeping the African under subjection is by keeping him poor.[38]

Here the respondent sums up the whole African experience of the double bind, expressing what was clearly a widespread sense of frustration and anger. He has gained a European education and adopted, as far as he has been permitted, a European lifestyle. Through mimesis he has learnt to desire to live in a European manner, with a European-style home, furnishings, meals, clothing and levels of personal hygiene. Yet, no matter how well-educated he has become, how Westernised his aspirations, in European eyes he remains "African" and therefore outside European circles of privilege and power. He has been encouraged to "be like me", and yet, when he responds, is rebuffed by the "do not be like me".

[38] Ibid., 96.

In this way Africans became aware of themselves as distinct from their models, acquiring, identifying with and internalising, through mimesis, European culture; yet at the same time forbidden to become their models and instead assigned the identity of "African". An identity designed to frustrate their "advance" towards European "civilisation". The more they identify with the model, the more they are rebuffed; the more intense the identification becomes, the more intense the rebuff; and the more the boundaries harden and the clarity of identity sharpens as the conflict takes each turn in a spiral.

4.3.1.2 Suffrage and the Double Bind

In the 1930s, when African Nationalist identity was barely beginning to emerge, the question of political advancement appeared on the agenda, but in a deeply ambivalent manner that kept it as a distant prospect without any real intention of making it truly available. In effect the political advancement - for which one must read "voting rights" - is another example of the double bind at work. There was to be no immediate political equality until the African met the criteria of European civilisation, even if there should be no impediment to this happening one day.[39]

The Federation experiment was, in British eyes, an effort to create some kind of "liberal democracy" in which the aspirations of a profoundly outnumbered Settler community were to be balanced with the principles of universal suffrage taken for granted in British parliamentary democracy. The Settlers, however, remained increas-

[39] Ibid., 120.

ingly resistant to African participation in public life. Many Settlers and British officials were convinced that the African populace had neither the education nor the experience to exercise the power of the ballot with due responsibility.

> As far as the franchise was concerned the existing qualifications for voters were based on literacy and property which excluded older and certainly responsible Africans. How to widen the electorate without letting in a flood of ignorant black people to swamp the minority of whites was the problem.[40]

In addition to excluding "responsible Africans" who could not qualify, the "Special List" votes were heavily discounted, ensuring that the "Ordinary List" voters always had more representatives in the Legislative Council. This entailed that "political equality" was still as far off as ever, with doubts about the "maturity" of African insight into democratic processes disguising a deeper sense that Africans would never be ready, and that Europeans would and should always take the lead in running the country. Thus Africans were encouraged to "be like me" and to think in terms of acquiring democratic rights and responsibilities as highly desirable social and political goods. At the same time the African leaders in Northern Rhodesia found that their aspirations to a universal franchise were "obstacled" by the Settlers' refusal to accept that they were, or would ever be, capable of exercising democratic responsibility.

A frustrated African leadership expressed their sense of being caught in the double bind with incisive clarity:

[40] Monica Fisher, *Nswana - The Heir: The life and Times of Charles Fisher as Surgeon in Central Africa* (Ndola: Mission Press, 1991), 85.

> As regards partnership, the Government says the time is ready; … but when we bring up representation the Government says the time is not ready… How is it that for other things the time is ready, but for representation the time is not ready?[41]

Until the emergence of African Nationalism there was little sense of common African identity. Ethnic groups encountered the Europeans piecemeal, and were disposed to make very different responses to their encroachment. Some offered resistance, others willingly entered into treaty arrangements with the newcomers. As colonisation progressed and the Settlers became the dominant culture Africans found themselves confronted by a system which at one and the same time sought both to distinguish between them and to collapse these distinctions in order to treat them all as the same sort of essentially second-class citizens. On the one hand they were to be African "natives" whose culture was supposed to progress at an appropriately slow pace towards "maturity". On the other hand they were to be labouring poor with a static role within a stable political economy, with less rights, influence and opportunities than the Europeans because they were Africans. Both halves of this system were based on stereotypical misunderstandings; both intended to keep Africans within the orbit of "African" culture and forbid their acquisition of the rights and responsibilities Europeans were demanding for themselves. The common African identity was therefore generated "over against" the Settlers who sought to secure their position through their campaigns for "Responsible Government", Federation and Dominion status by excluding Africans from all but the most menial participation in public life. As this conflict intensified a common African identity emerged and became more clearly delineated. And so developed:

[41] Mulford, *Zambia*, 34.

> ...the political consciousness of being African, a Northern Rhodesian African. This marked the emergence of African nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and clearly represented a response to the white Settlers' drive for power.[42]

Africans came to perceive themselves as an "oppressed majority", an oppression based upon their being African rather than their belonging to a specific ethnic group. Thus, a sense of shared grievance developed across the African ethnic groups, particularly amongst educated and urban Africans, which engendered a sense of common identity as "victims". The respondents in the Davis Survey were, in 1932, already seeing themselves not in terms of ethnic identities but as members of the wider "my group", "my race", "the Black man" and "African". They could already express a legitimate catalogue of grievances against Europeans from the point of view of their identity as "Africans" rather than as members of individual groups. Some years after the liberation struggle it was noted that:

> Many older Africans, too, show an intense awareness of past racial humiliations, and acknowledge an emotional identification of an 'African' grouping as opposed to a European one.[43]

The appearance of a common African identity, the pre-cursor of a "national" identity, was promoted by a process of identification and expulsion. Africans sought to become like, and eventually to expel and displace, their European rulers. Smaller conflicts and expulsions between the ethnic groups were subsumed into the larger conflict as groups identified with each other and resolved the tensions generated by that identification by an "all against one" projection focused upon the Europeans.

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42 Ibid., 333.
43 Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict*, 65.

This identity was at its most complete in the brief alliance between the largely Tonga A.N.C. and the U.N.I.P., which bridged, at least temporarily, a major fault-line in African society. The dramatic challenge recounted in the previous chapter, laid down by Nkumbula at the A.N.C. conference following the 1962 elections, indicates that "African Government" with all that this meant in terms of "kudos", was "now" gained by allowing the smaller conflicts between the A.N.C. and the U.N.I.P. to be subsumed, at least for the time being, into a unity of "all against one".

4.4 Mimetic Doubling

One of the features of Girard's insights is the appearance of mimetic doubling, where the contestants in any conflict come to resemble one another. While the doubling in the case of Zambia may not be exactly the classical vision of the "monstrous double" which Girard detects in Greek myth and tragedy, there are points where the contestants in the conflict come to resemble one another in their efforts to triumph over and displace one another. In fact through the conflicts which marked most of the lifetime of the protectorate, one can discern the rivals occupying much the same positions at different times.

For example there were elements of doubling between the Settlers and the Nationalists. We have seen how Nationalist identity emerged in response to the Settler drive to power. This inevitably makes Nationalist identity a "double" of the Settler identity. And in the Nationalist campaign for universal suffrage and independence one can immediately recognise a "double" of the Settler campaign for "Responsible Government". Both desired the same object; both desired it in such a way that the other

would inevitably be excluded from it. Both sought to use similar tactics at differing points in the struggle as “kudos”, representing power and influence over both the policies implemented by the Governor and his staff and over British Colonial policy devised in London, flowed back and forth between the two groups.

The Settlers themselves were not always in as strong a position as it might at first appear. Even prior to World War II the Passfield Memorandum had weakened their position eliciting a wave of protests which included white politicians throughout East Africa. As the political climate changed following World War II and Britain divested itself of its empire, the Settler position became steadily weaker. By the 1960s even Conservative British Prime Ministers were speaking of the “winds of change”. The distinctions between the two groups were dissolving as the Settlers lost the sympathy of the Government and their political influence faded as a consequence. The Settlers began to take on some of the aspects of the Nationalists. As the London talks progressed the Nationalists began to win the argument and British policy steadily turned towards ending the Federation. Welensky's position became so tenuous that he resorted to the Nationalist tactics of boycotting the talks. Towards the end of the process hard-line members of the United Federal Party began to threaten a mirror image of the Nationalist “cha-cha-cha rebellion”: strikes amongst the European mine workers, civil disobedience, even military force.

Kaunda's bitter and angry words at the breakdown of the negotiations in 1961 clearly show the way in which each of the protagonists mirrored and were mirroring the actions of the other:

> I have repeatedly asked the people of Northern Rhodesia to be patient and non-violent in thought, word and deed. But I have recently removed one of these noble words from my vocabulary. It is 'patience'. Welensky refused to be patient and he got what he wanted. We who were patient have been neglected.[44]

Another example of doubling can be seen in the way in which the U.N.I.P. as a party took on aspects of the Protectorate's administration. The party was strongly centralised, with executive officials at all levels appointed centrally rather than elected, and expected to report regularly to headquarters. An emphasis was placed upon high standards of administration and financial accountability. The U.N.I.P., however unconsciously, began to resemble the centralised organisation of the state, with its Governor, appointed officials and centralised structure of accountability.

The post-Independence constitution carries this "doubling" further. African presidentialism is termed "institutional-charismatic". It is a carry-over from the leader and the party that achieved independence. As a product of "Independence" it is intended to be a "radical break with the colonial past". At the same time it reflects continuity with the colonial tradition, which was itself strongly authoritarian, resting in the last resort on force, "without any effective separation of powers."[45] The post-Independence constitutions show this clearly. The President's authority is final in the face of a relatively weak Parliament, to which he is ultimately not accountable. This is a straight forward mirror of the Governor and his final authority over a legislative council with only limited power. In essence both the U.N.I.P. and the new nation became a double of the administration which was eventually expelled. Once again we have two rival groups occupying the same position at two different stages in the con-

[44] Mulford, *Zambia*, 178.
[45] Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict*, 35.

flict. In the case of the U.N.I.P. becoming the “double” of the Protectorate Government, this had profound consequences for the political life of post-Independence Zambia.

4.5 The Crisis and The Victim.

Towards the end of the Independence struggle sudden and very temporary re-alignments characteristic of the “sacrificial” or “mimetic” crisis took place. Kaunda and the U.N.I.P. leadership, like many African leaders, were informed by a mixture of both Western religious and political ideas and African spirituality, all of which carried with them ideals of universal humanity. In conflicted relationships real distinctions within one group tend to be collapsed in the ideologically-conditioned stereotypes of their rivals. The ideals espoused by Kaunda and the rest of the U.N.I.P. leadership permitted the possibility of de-constructing the less helpful stereotypes of Europeans and allowing some of the tensions and distinctions between the Government and the Settler community, as well as within the Settler community, to be perceptible. Kaunda was therefore able to reach out and invite Europeans into what he promoted as a non-racial and truly equal partnership based upon universal suffrage. Inevitably these invitations grew more seductive as the relative power of the Settlers and Nationalists changed.

Europeans responding to Kaunda's invitation fell roughly into three categories. First the more conservative elements, representing the majority of European opinion, who sought to make the best of an impending disaster. Having had their worst suspicions realised when they proved unable to persuade the British Government to continue the

Federation in some form, they attempted to create a minimal winning coalition with those whom they viewed as the more moderate and tractable African leadership. They hoped that this group, would do less to undermine the European dominance in the political economy. It was these more conservative Europeans who sought some kind of relationship between Tshombe's Katanga and Northern Rhodesia[46] and who later made an electoral alliance with the more "moderate" A.N.C. The second group were the Liberal-minded European Settlers, like David Stirling and Dr. Charles Fisher. They had proposed a rather idealistic common front against extremism, nationalism and racism and thought in terms of a controlled transfer of power over a set period.[47] They too found the "moderate" A.N.C. preferable, but many were able to respond more positively to Kaunda's invitation.[48] The third group, a very small minority of Europeans, were more radical than the liberal group, and joined the U.N.I.P. The conservative and moderately liberal European groups found themselves "switching sides" to join the African Nationalists in a coalition of all against the one entity that all had perceived to be the "obstacle" to their desires: the Colonial Office, and the British Government it represented. Gore-Brown, a member of the U.N.I.P., had already presaged some form of alliance between European and Africans in order to remove the influence of the Colonial Office with a controversial speech in the Legislative Council in 1948. At the time, the speech seemed to give support to the Federation. It is, however, likely that he had in mind something more like the alliance that Kaunda was ostensibly promoting.[49] The possibility, therefore, of a radical realign-

[46] Kalinga, "Independence Negotiations in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia.."
[47] Lamb, *The Africa House*, 309.
[48] Fisher, *Nswana*, 194-195.
[49] Lamb, *The Africa House*, 251-252. Lamb argues that his intention was to advocate an African-European alliance.

ment of European opinion, at least existed. At the dissolution of the Federation an alternative relationship between African and Settler developed and a new community of "one against all" based upon the expulsion of the colonial power emerged.

As a corollary to this, the social changes in Britain left even Conservative Governments less inclined to imperial entanglements and more ready to part company with the Settlers. Both McLeod and Maudling were considered "progressive" on colonial matters and by 1962 any incoherence in British policy towards Northern Rhodesia was resolved by passing the entire responsibility for Central Africa to the distinctly progressive R. A. Butler.[50] In effect the Colonial Power solved the problem of its imperial entanglement in the territory by colluding with the shift of allegiances and willingly playing the role of the scapegoat. Its expulsion allowed the emergence of the new nation.

4.6 Some Conclusions.

In the foregoing material we have seen how new identities have arisen as a result of the conflicts which mark the history of Northern Rhodesia. The emergence of two significant identities have been explored: that of the African community and that of the Settler community. Both these identities bound together sets of disparate ethnic communities in alliances founded upon the exclusion of a group perceived to be

[50] Ian Gilmour, "Oxford Oxford Dictionary of National Biography article: Butler, Richard Austen," n.d., http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30886?docPos=2 (Accessed 3 March, 2009); N. Piers Ludlow, "Oxford Oxford Dictionary of National Biography article: Sandys, (Edwin) Duncan," n.d., http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/39858 (Accessed 3 March, 2009); Robert Shepherd, "Oxford Dictionary of National Biography article: Maudling, Reginald," n.d., http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31428 (Accessed 3 March, 2009).

"other". These two groups temporarily resolved the conflicts between them by forming an alliance of "all against one", the "one" being the British-appointed Colonial Government.

This answers the question with which we began this chapter: "why is there an entity called Zambia"? Zambia emerged out of the conflicts which marked the history of Northern Rhodesia. As a nation it was founded upon the exclusion of the British colonial Government and this event was constitutive not only of its "nationhood" but of its national identity and whatever ethnic cohesion has existed in the nation. It is a mimetic representation or "double" of the British Protectorate Administration, based upon the Single Victim Mechanism.

This, however, requires us to pose a new question. As we noted in the introduction to this work, Girard's thesis suggests that the emergence of a stable identity may require many acts of expulsion of the sort we have described above. Periods of stability in between foundational acts of generative violence are maintained in the face of tensions and conflicts by the mythologising of the foundational act or acts. The victim is often divinised, and the whole action disguised in a myth which is then recounted and repeated either regularly or as necessary in the form of sacrificial rituals. Girard argues that from time to time the rituals themselves fail to maintain stability and a new cycle of rivalry, crisis and catharsis begins.

All of this suggests that stability and cohesion are difficult to attain, and even more difficult to maintain. In pursuit of a missiology which allows the church to contribute fruitfully and effectively to the building of "the politics of the pure in heart" in Zam-

bia we must next explore how Zambia fared after her independence, whether the one expulsion we have described was sufficient to create a nation which was truly “one Zambia, one Nation” or whether fragmentation and instability soon followed. This is the purpose of the next chapter.

5 The Mythic Cycle

In the last chapter we examined the emergence of Zambian national identity and concluded that it emerged as a result of a complex set of conflictual relationships culminating in a coalition of the "all against one" characteristic of the Single Victim Mechanism. This answered the question: "why is there a nation called Zambia with some sense of identity?" The identity of Zambia emerged out of conflict, through the processes of mimesis and rivalry. Before we can move towards a missiological engagement with the Zambian context we need to ask some further questions. The first of these concerns how Zambia fared after Independence. Therefore the purpose of this chapter is to answer the question "how did the conflicts which attended the formation of Zambia affect its post-Independence life?"

Girard's thesis indicates that identities established by the Single Victim Mechanism are not particularly stable, and need "refreshing" on a regular basis. In the historical account we have offered in Chapter One it is clear that there was significant instability in post-Independence Zambia. The alliances which had formed to expel the colonial power quickly fragmented into mutually antagonistic groups. The historical material indicates a struggle in which the identity of the nation was at stake. The axes of division in this struggle appear to follow the ethnic distinctions in Zambia, with a particular, but not unique, fault-line appearing between the Tonga and Barotse peoples on the one part, and the Eastern and Northern ethnic groups on the other. This in turn suggests that the "smaller" ethnic and language group rivalries subsumed in the conflict and catharsis through which Zambia was created soon re-emerged.

The instability in the national identity becomes clear when we examine the startling number of constitutions under which both Northern Rhodesia and Zambia have been governed. Stable societies have, in one form or another, a fairly static set of fundamental laws which define the nature of the nation. Britain is unusual in that these laws, while existing, are not gathered together and defined as a "constitution". For many other nations, both Northern Rhodesia and Zambia included, these laws are expressed in a written constitution which effectively embodies the identity of the nation.

> The process of political transition is best seen as a struggle between incumbent and opposition political interests over both the rules of the political game and the resources with which it is played.[1]

A constitution states the "rules of the game", and while constitutions are legitimately modified from time to time Northern Rhodesia and Zambia have been governed under a bewildering array of constitutions from World War II onwards. If political transition represents a struggle over the "rules of the game"; rapidly progressing through a series of constitutions would indicate considerable political struggle and instability, not simply at the level of the rough-and-tumble of parliamentary debate and of changing governing coalitions, but over the more fundamental "grammatical rules" which govern the nature and language of political discourse. The more intense and widespread the conflict, the more often the constitution was changed.

[1] Bratton, "Zambia Starts Over," 82.

Since 1964 Zambia has been governed under three different constitutional arrangements and at the time of the writing a fourth is currently in progress. This in itself is an indication of continuing instability within Zambia's body politic. These changes were not simple adjustments at the "fringes", but, as switches from multi-party to one-party systems and back again, were changes which affected the fundamental nature and identity of the nation. It is clear from this that "what little unification and mobilisation had been achieved in the independence struggle soon dissolved".[2]

Girard argues that the double-bind and the mimetic rivalry which accompanies it mark out a template for future behaviour. This is particularly so in the formation of the individual identity through childhood. The child will be deeply affected by the double-bind, and the rejection it carries.

> The future orientation of his desires - that is, the choice of his future models - will be significantly affected by the dichotomies of his childhood. In fact, these models will determine the shape of his personality.[3]

Given that Girard sees conflictual mimesis as the source of both community and individual identities it seems reasonable that this could be applied *mutatis mutandis* to the formation of a nation. In what follows we shall examine the political life of post-independence Zambia, seeking evidence for a cyclical pattern of conflict, crisis and catharsis. Each turn of this cycle itself a mimesis of those first foundational events, one of a series of reiterations of the conflicts out of which the nation was formed.

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2 Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict*, 34.
3 Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 147-148.

5.1 The First Reiteration: The One Party State

5.1.1 Breaking the National Identity: The Europeans

Disappointment and disillusionment soon followed the successful liberation struggle. The new dawn[4] had broken, but the daylight exposed the fact that little or nothing could change in a hurry. The high expectations which motivate any liberation struggle can rarely be met, and Zambia was no exception. Most Zambians remained as poor and powerless on the 26th October 1964 as they had been in the months and years before. The first target for the inevitable disappointment and frustration were the European settlers. The Europeans were in a position of a minority anywhere: easy to isolate, without widespread support or sympathy within Zambia, and in the case of White settlers in Africa, with little in the way of sympathy elsewhere. Their position was made more precarious because they were easily identified and distinguished from the general population. As there were few Zambians with the necessary skills and no third level education whatsoever in the country, Zambia needed the Europeans, with their skills, education and experience to continue to run crucial services such as education, health and security, the Government, administration and the economy. Nor was there a radical land reform. Kaunda, as much as he was influenced by socialism, left the agricultural sector in private hands. There was, in any case, little to actually redistribute. The measures taken in 1934 and 1946 had averted a concentration of land into a few European hands of the sort that had taken place in Southern Rhodesia, and by the mid 1950s only 6 percent of the land was either

[4] Kwacha, Kwacha ("dawn, dawn") was a U.N.I.P. chant during the liberation struggle.

Crown land or in private European hands.[5] Europeans were therefore in the ambivalent position of being "necessary" in the political economy, but given the positions they occupied and their continuing relative wealth they were also an unwelcome reminder and continuation of past subjugation and humiliation.

As Kaunda's entanglement in the politics throughout the region began to engender significant economic penalties, Europeans living in Zambia became an obvious target for the projection of the internal conflict. A widespread belief developed that the remaining settlers had sympathies with the white-dominated regimes to the south. Tensions emerging in 1965 rose quickly, leading to riots in October 1966 in which one European woman was killed. Senior European police and army officers were dismissed and in 1967 five Europeans were tried for spying.[6]

In 1969 there was a clash between the Government and judiciary when the European High Court judge, Justice Evans, gave two rulings, one on the apparent violation of Zambian territory by white Portuguese colonial military personnel from Mozambique, which went against the Government. The Chief Justice, also a European, defended the judgements and there was a violent reaction, with members of the Zambian Youth Service storming the High Court carrying placards, one of which read "White men cannot be Zambians".[7]

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5 Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam. [On the Removal of the Tonga Tribesmen from the Site of the Kariba Dam.]*, 74.
6 Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict*, 27-29.
7 Ibid., 50.

It is beyond the scope of this work to establish whether the trial of the five Europeans for spying for the white dominated regimes in the region was conducted fairly on the basis of sound evidence, or was more of a "show trial" offering the public a convenient scapegoat. Given that the innocence or guilt of the scapegoat is irrelevant it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that both were true. Plots and spies uncovered, feed paranoia and facilitate the projection of tensions and real plots and real spies will do as well as, if not better than, those manufactured by the Government. What does appear to be the case is that not all of the remaining Europeans had sympathy with the Rhodesian or South African Governments, even if they may well have felt ill at ease in their new "African" country.[8]

Any differences in support for the Rhodesian Settler Government amongst Europeans, became invisible. African stereotypes of Europeans portrayed all Europeans as "a menace to national security". Clearly this was a mimetic reversal of the European stereotypes of Africans in the past. There is credible evidence that the security forces visited violence indiscriminately upon members of the European population, particularly during the Second Republic.[9] In essence, the Europeans were subject to brief and sporadic, but nevertheless real, persecutions, becoming scapegoats for a Zambia ill at ease with itself even in its earliest and most hopeful and prosperous years.

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[8] Robert Wyatt, a long established settler farmer remarked in private conversation "They were accusing us of supporting the regime down south, but we weren't". Wyatt was the founding chair of Mkushi Fellowship Trust which runs Chengelo school, one of Zambia's few truly integrated boarding schools.

[9] Conversations with "Vickie" Falkenstein and Hugh Carruthers. Falkenstein is a nurse and Carruthers a geologist born in Zambia. Falkenstein's home was invaded by paramilitary police who beat her, and Carruthers was arrested and beaten by security forces while on a legitimate prospecting mission for which he had appropriate documented permissions. Wyatt also remarked on the persecution and knew of other farmers had suffered.

5.1.2 Breaking the Identity: African Ethnic Tensions

The heritage of being the Party which brought about independence together with the centralised nature of the state meant that the U.N.I.P. became identified as the "national" Party; the bearer of any residual sense of national unity and identity. This identification was made all the more intense given the failure of the A.N.C. to break out of what was essentially an ethnic ghetto and to establish itself on a nation-wide basis.[10] The Party was, however, too disunited to provide the necessary "cohesive national ideology" with which to transcend the tensions within the nation.

The power of the Presidency meant that the President would always be an alluring figure and the power and patronage of the Presidency an object of desire to which all Zambian politicians would aspire. Inevitably this generated rivalries within the Party. In part, these were rivalries to gain access to and close association with, the President, preferably through ministerial office, in order to gain from the patronage which only he could distribute. Equally there were rivalries with the President as political leaders sought to exclude him from office in order to seize it themselves. The ethnic and language group conflicts in the nation were played out within the U.N.I.P. as mimetic rivalries fragmented the party along clear regional and ethnic axes. Tensions were so great that in February 1968 Kaunda briefly resigned in protest against the ethnocentrism.

[10] Pettman. *Zambia, Security and Conflict* 51.

The 1968 General Election exposed more tensions, with an accusation of murder made against unspecified "Lozis".[11] With the end of the arrangements which provided some protected seats for Europeans, specifically European political parties disappeared in the 1968 elections, leaving only the U.N.I.P. and the A.N.C. in parliament. The A.N.C. became the primary target upon which the U.N.I.P. members could project the disunity within both their party and the country in order to generate some facsimile of unity.[12]

Like the Europeans, both the A.N.C. and the groups breaking away from the U.N.I.P. were accused of being overly sympathetic towards the White-dominated regimes in the region. These accusations of treason and betrayal took on unrealistic and paranoid aspects characteristic of mimetic rivalry. The action to detain the leadership of the opposition and breakaway groups, along with Kaunda's willingness to bow to the pressure to create a one-party state, were acts of projection and expulsion. They were an effort to both settle the conflicts in the nation and create a new, more stable, identity for the nation by using the opposition as the scapegoat.

The new constitution provided a yet more centralised State and gave even more authority to the President, creating a deeper dependence upon Presidential patronage and making the office more alluring. Thus the "expulsion" of the opposition as the scapegoat simply reiterated the original generative pattern.

[11] Ibid., 53.
[12] Ibid., 65.

In this brief examination we see the first turn of the cycle. The identity created in the conflict through which Zambia was born fragmented almost as soon as the Scapegoat was expelled. As tensions increased the Europeans became the first victims, briefly and sporadically vilified. As this failed to ease the internal tensions of the nation the opposition A.N.C., together with groups breaking away from the U.N.I.P. became the next victims, again vilified and finally excluded. Out of this expulsion the new one party state was born. Its novelty, however, was only apparent. In reality it was a mimetic representation of the old state.

5.2 The Second Reiteration: A New Multi-Party State.

Daniel Posner argues that amongst the identities available to Zambians are two not quite coterminous identities: ethnic and language group. This, he demonstrates, is due to migrations from rural urban environments in which the origin of the largest group migrating in a specific area is shaped by a variety of economic and political factors. Inevitably the language which acted as the *lingua franca* of a particular town or region was the language of the largest group. The extent and importance of a particular language was also strongly influenced by the languages chosen by both missionary organisations and Government for liturgical and Biblical translation and general education.[13] In the absence of other pressures the language which formed the local medium of education tended to become the main language of the area. During both the liberation struggle and the first years of Independence people tended to form alliances based on their common linguistic heritage, even if, as was often the case, the people speaking the same language were in fact from different ethnic groups.

[13] Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 56-83.

Posner argues that in the Second Republic a change in identities took place as people opted for ethnic rather than language group identity as the basis for alliances that might produce a "minimal winning coalition" in any contest for the benefits available through the one-party state. This was due to a change in the "focus" of political and economic contests: from the national to the regional and local.[14] This inevitably promoted ethnocentrism with old alliances contracting to identifications which were more "exclusive" as the field of the conflict narrowed.

Far from settling or at least suppressing ethnic conflict, therefore, the transition to a one party state created circumstances in which more, rather than less, instability would develop as old communal identities fragmented and new and more narrowly defined identities constituted by new and narrower conflicts emerged. The Party was neither able to suppress nor to contain these intensifying conflicts, despite banning internal debate. As the economy deteriorated and resources diminished conflict grew ever more intense.

Legitimate political outlets through which dissension could be constructively expressed were stifled, so Zambians turned instead to a variety of "civil society" groups, NGO's, church organisations, unions and business interests.[15] Many such groups had a prior ideology which made them transcendent, at least in theory, of ethnic identity. These disparate groups became focused less upon contesting for power between themselves and more upon expressing dissatisfaction with the régime. They began to grow into an unlikely coalition. The *raison d'être* of this coalition was the removal of the U.N.I.P. and Kaunda from power together with a return to a mul-

[14] Ibid., 143-150.
[15] Bratton, "Zambia Starts Over," 86.

ti-party constitution rather than the aims and objectives of any of the individual organisations involved in it.[16] The "Third Republic" was therefore created out of a coalition of "all against Kaunda" who became the "scapegoat" whose expulsion created a very temporary peace within the nation and allowed the emergence of yet a new national identity.

A number of classical features of the Single Victim Mechanism are present in the campaign to depose Kaunda. First, Kaunda was becoming more and more unpopular, so much so that there was a short period of near-celebration when a group of soldiers announced that they had seized power in a coup. Kaunda was hurt and surprised by the reaction, warning that the coup leaders would have been much worse than him. He might well have been correct but public reaction shows how strong the projection was. Second, there was a rapidly growing trend of defection to the new movement amongst even senior members of the U.N.I.P. The National Interim Committee for Multi-party Democracy formed in July 1990 was chaired by former Finance Minister Arthur Wina and included many other former ministers and senior U.N.I.P. members. The Movement even attracted the support of one of Zambia's very few politically active Europeans, Guy Scott, who later became Minister for Agriculture. A third feature of the Single Victim Mechanism can be observed in the nature of the election campaign:

[16] "Movement for Multi-Party Democracy - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia," n.d., http://en-.wikipedia.org/wiki/Movement_for_Multi-Party_Democracy (Accessed 5 March, 2009). Accessed 05 March 2009.

> …. [T]he personalized and vituperative nature of the election campaign may have induced many voters to cast their ballots against Kaunda and U.N.I.P. rather than for elevated principles of multiparty competition, accountable government, and a regular rotation of leaders.[17]

What this clearly indicates is that Kaunda had become the scapegoat upon whom the tensions and conflicts wracking Zambian society were projected. He was duly expelled from office.

The fourth feature of the Single Victim Mechanism lies in the comprehensive nature of the victory won by M.M.D. In as far as it is possible it was "all" against "one".

Kaunda fitted the role of scapegoat very well. All Zambians knew that his family was from Malawi, and he was careful throughout his Presidency to balance his cabinets and at least appear to be unconnected with Zambian ethnic groups. He was therefore an obvious scapegoat, someone easily excluded with little risk of eliciting widespread public empathy and few, if any, potential allies to offer support or exacerbate the conflict.

The expected pattern can be observed once more in these events: a precarious unity is created in a national coalition whose identity is founded upon expulsion. Mimetic rivalry emerges and as conflict grows ever intense the coalition fragments. In the midst of the conflict a new coalition emerges whose identity and integration rest solely upon the exclusion of a new scapegoat. In this reiteration of the pattern the

[17] Bratton, "Zambia Starts Over," 93.

M.M.D. plays the role of the U.N.I.P., struggling for "liberation" and a return to "democracy" and a meaningful franchise, while the U.N.I.P. takes on the role of the Protectorate Government, inviting and yet forbidding participation.

5.3 The Third Reiteration

The constitution of the Third Republic has many similarities to those of the First and Second Republics, creating a powerful Presidency with only weak mechanisms of accountability. Its new democratic institutions were fragile, and progress depended heavily on significant economic improvement, without which the populace would soon start to seek a new victim.[18] Tangible economic development and democratic progress simply did not occur. Instead the economy declined, with the I.M.F. Structural Adjustment Programmes no more popular or effective than in the past and the Government proving "as inept, corrupt and oppressive as the previous U.N.I.P. single-party dictatorship".[19] Chiluba managed to contain some of the potential conflict by using the opportunities presented by what appears to be a genuine plan to destabilise the country and seize power drawn up by some extremist members of the U.N.I.P. which was uncovered in 1993, and by a bungled coup attempt carried out by disaffected members of the military in 1997.[20] As a result he was able to encourage the projection of the tensions onto the U.N.I.P. and its leadership.[21] Following the

[18] Ibid., 82.
[19] Denis Venter, "Democracy and Multiparty Politics in Africa," *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review* 19, no. 1 (2003): 6-7.
[20] "History of Zambia - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia," n.d., chrome://ietab/content/reloaded.html?url= (Accessed 5 March, 2009). Accessed 05 March 2009.
[21] Whitaker, "Citizens and Foreigners," 114.

1993 plot, the constitution was amended to prevent Kaunda from standing for the office of President, and in 1999 Kaunda was declared stateless in a High Court judgement at Ndola.[22]

Chiluba made further efforts to declare rivals as "aliens" and have them deported, indeed a tendency emerged within the M.M.D. "to treat all critics of Government ... as foreigners".[23] Some of those declared to be foreign nationals, like Dipak Patel (who was not ultimately deported) and Majid Ticklay, were unlikely to elicit much empathy from African Zambians.[24] Others, like Christon Tembo and John Chinula, presented a significant risk because they were, or could claim to be, connected with ethnic groups within Zambia and could therefore elicit support from those ethnic groups.[25]

As is typical of many present-day African nations, some Zambian ethnic groups transcend what are now international boundaries, and over one million Zambians can claim to belong to such groups.[26] Chiluba was engendering a sense of national identity by attempting to create a mythology in which the past is "mis-recognised" and national borders which did not exist in the past are created anachronistically in the

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22 Ibid.

23 Ibid., 115.

24 They were of Asian origin. As in East Africa there is considerable ill feeling towards Asians, who are generally better educated, usually running small to medium sized businesses and generally considerably wealthier than most Africans.

25 Amnesty International, "Zambia: Forcible Exile to Suppress Dissent," November 13, 1997, http://repository.forcedmigration.org/show_metadata.jsp?pid=fmo:3973 (Accessed 9 March, 2009).

26 Whitaker, "Citizens and Foreigners," 116.

minds of the present-day community, leaving ethnic groups whose members were targeted for deportation with a deep sense of exclusion.[27] The effort failed, and Chiluba himself became the next potential victim.

Chiluba's resort to oppression, his steady expulsion of powerful opponents and the mounting corruption of his regime all led to his growing unpopularity, exposing and isolating him as the next scapegoat. The same sort of alliance within civic society, churches, NGOs and unions which had facilitated the removal of Kaunda began to grow around a move to remove Chiluba. By the Party Conference of 2001 former ministers and other senior party members had joined the opposition in a coalition of "all against one" to ensure Chiluba's expulsion from power and his due exit from the Office of President. Even Chiluba's attempt to stamp some "behind the scenes" authority upon the M.M.D. failed. Chiluba's successor, far from being a slow-witted compliant puppet, also joined the coalition against him, instigating the removal of his immunity and opening the way for his prosecution for corruption. Whitaker speculates that Mwanawasa's revocation of the exile of Tembo and Ticklay was part of a constructive trend, halting the rising xenophobia of the Party and the country. While this may be true, the move was possible because Chiluba, having lost all support, had become an alternative and much less "risky" scapegoat. Mwanawasa could be portrayed as "the one who righted all wrongs", an image he had already acquired during his time as a lawyer, while Chiluba became the scapegoat blamed for all the corruption and economic failure. Chiluba was a particularly useful scapegoat because the corruption case has been complex and long drawn out by legal manoeuvres on both sides and suspensions. This means that Chiluba could fill not only the role of found-

[27] Ibid.

ing victim but also of repetitive cult victim. He could be brought before a court where more of the complex tapestry of corruption was recounted and Chiluba duly vilified in the public media as and when necessary. The case could then return to obscurity until the next time it was needed.

5.4 Repeating the Pattern

According to Girard, religion and its attendant culture develop in order that the mythologised and mis-recognised story of the expulsion may be re-enacted and thus social peace maintained. Even this resort breaks down eventually, occasioning the "sacrificial crisis" in which social tensions rise until a new act of victimisation takes place. Modern societies are less likely to institute overtly religious rites, but they, nevertheless, have "secular" memorials and rites by which the mythologised memories of the past are maintained and made available in pursuit of harmony. These ceremonies range from the once-in-a-generation event, such as the crowning of a constitutional monarch, or more frequent events, such as the State Opening of Parliament or the annual Act of Remembrance. These events assert the identity and unity of the nation, and often entail actions which recollect some divinised or partly divinised victim or victims. Zambia has few such well-established rites. Those who died as a result of the conflict which brought Zambia into being have not been transformed into mythic hero/victims in the way in which the dead of two World Wars have been in Europe. Many of the leaders of the liberation struggle are either still alive or have died over the ordinary course of time, rather than in the sort of circumstances which are the stuff of mythology. There was a tendency to elevate Kaunda to some divine or

semi-divine status,[28] but Kaunda did not fill the role of victim/god at Independence required for the process to work effectively. The last Governor, Sir Evelyn Hone, although himself born in Southern Rhodesia, was a close friend of Kaunda, and was noted for his sympathy with African nationalist aspirations in general and for his sympathy and continuing interest in Zambia in particular.[29] This made him also difficult to mythologise in the way required for the mechanism of generative violence. In more recent years, Kaunda has occupied a more ambivalent position, highly respected for his work on HIV/AIDS and occupying the position of "elder statesman" and "father of the nation" in the eyes of many, even accorded some honour for conceding defeat and departing office relatively peacefully, as well as still being reviled for his years of dictatorship. Perhaps a little of the ambivalence of the victim, therefore, hangs around him. He is, however, still alive, and it is hard to divinise a living person in this way without the panoply of sacred kingship. There are no rituals which attend him, no momentum to return him to office, and he attracts little in the way of a deeply-committed following. His position is more an indication that the political world of Zambia has moved on from him, and the respect he gains is little more than the respect proper to any elderly man of elevated status in African society. Zambia celebrates its Independence Day, however, without the glamour or the widespread familial and communal importance of Independence Day in the USA or the solemnity of Remembrance Day in Europe.

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28 Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict*, 41.

29 W. T. G Gates, "Sir Evelyn Hone, GCMG OBE," *African Affairs (London)* 75, no. 298 (1976): 99-100.

Ritual, notes Eliade, is designed to bring the community to "the fabled time of the beginnings".[30] Zambia has a deficit of ritual capable of retying the community to "the fabled time", and therefore of actions which might repeatedly recreate national identity and unity. Instead, the community finds itself repeating the actual cycle of expulsion and crisis with little or no intervening stability:

> Zambia was widely regarded as a major African success in democratization ...Such an assessment, however, supremely exalts form over substance, for neither the outgoing nor the incoming regime has had the ability to keep all the major groups included. In fact, the new regime has begun to repeat the very same process of exclusion that narrowed the base of its predecessor ... In little more than a year, the cycle began again. [31]

Horowitz goes on to note the exclusionary basis for the M.M.D.'s identity as a coalition, an identity which was short-lived and soon fragmented into yet another inter-ethnic contest:

> Quite clearly, the breadth of the M.M.D.'s multiethnic support against Kaunda at the time of the 1991 election was a function of the transitory nature of the contest in which it was engaged, just as Kaunda's own initial support against the colonial regime did not long survive the departure of the British. In each case, victory marked the beginning of an ethnic struggle, in which group leaders contended for the domination of the new regime and peeled away from the multiethnic party as they were defeated.[32]

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30 Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, World perspectives series,;no.21 (London: Allen & Unwin, 1964), 5.

31 Donald L. Horowitz, "Democracy in Divided Societies," *Journal of Democracy* 4, no. 4 (1993): 25-26.

32 Ibid.

5.4.1.1 From Event to Myth: Intensity and Transformation.

One is bound to ask whether the inability of Zambia to generate a mythology out of the events of history undermines Girard's theory, at least to some extent. The expectation would be that founding events are "mythologised" and then recounted and repeated in their mythologised form as a means of sustaining community cohesion. However Girard recognises and accounts for varying degrees of mythologisation. He argues that in the story of Apollonius of Tyana the beggar whose stoning brings about the end of the plague in Ephesus is only partially transformed.[33] Girard argues that a double transformation takes place in the most complete myths. In the first transformation the victim is transformed into a demonic monster, and in the second stage into a positive and beneficent figure who brings healing. In the story of Apollonius the beggar only undergoes the first transformation into the plague demon; the second transformation does not take place.[34] Instead, the story resorts to attributing the miracle of the end of the plague to the power of a pre-existing god, in this case Heracles.[35]

According to Girard the foundational events which are most completely disguised under the aspect of myth are those where there is the most fear in the first place and where the victim's death or expulsion bring the deepest relief. It is, therefore, the emotional intensity of the events which enables the full transfiguration of event into myth.[36] The conflict need not be widespread nor even particularly prolonged, simply intense and profoundly traumatic. When it comes to considering Zambia's history it is clearly a good deal less traumatic than many of the transformations to political in-

[33] Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 66-67.
[34] Ibid., 65-66.
[35] Ibid., 67-68.
[36] Ibid., 71.

dependence experienced by her near neighbours. Indeed Zambia has been, and remains, a place of refuge for peoples from more profoundly disturbed nations throughout South and Central Africa. Kaunda was strongly influenced by Gandhi, and while there was indeed violence and violent deaths the liberation struggle was largely conducted at level of civil disobedience and street protest. This is how the events are remembered today. The statues erected to commemorate the cha-cha-cha rebellion show figures in broken chains throwing stones not carrying firearms. The British authorities also remained relatively restrained. There were local tragedies, and people died as a result of police action. Such deaths are nothing less than appalling tragedies for all concerned. Clearly there was a cost paid by those involved in the struggle, people did die, either as a result of street violence or by legal sanction. The deaths which occurred in Zambia's liberation struggle, however, do not have the emotional resonance of Amritsar or Soweto. If the trauma attending the achievement of political Independence was relatively shallow, so was the relief brought by the final expulsion. Zambian society changed only slowly and the euphoria of liberation, as we have already noted, did not last long. The structures of Government, again as we have already noted, remained very similar and were often represented at the local level by the same people who had acted on behalf of the British, at least for the first few years after Independence.

The events through which Zambia came into being did not have the cumulative effect necessary to bring about the double transformation which Girard finds in the most completely mythologised events. One could say much the same for the events surrounding the transformation from one-party to multi-party states. The M.M.D.

fought much the same sort of campaign as that fought by the liberation movements during the Protectorate. Civil disobedience and street protests were its characteristic methods. Indeed many of the partners would have had strong practical or ideological objections to espousing more violent or destructive forms of resistance. Kaunda himself, while being quite capable of exercising repression, was in the end willing to concede power and go with a certain amount of dignity. Despite the introduction of a multi-party system the structures of Government remained very similar, and any changes in the political economy were often initially changes for the worse.

One does not wish in any way to minimise either the courage or the suffering of individuals during these times of transition, or to claim that Zambia's history was without elements of deep trauma and tragedy. However, when one compares the story Zambia, with those of Angola or the Democratic Republic of Congo or Zimbabwe or, for that matter, the experience of Europe during two world wars, the events of Zambia's history are less deeply traumatic and less intense. Under such circumstances the logical implications of Girard's account of the transformation from event to myth would indicate that a complete mythologisation of these specific events remains unlikely.

5.5 Conclusions.

We are now able to answer the question with which we began this chapter: “how did the conflicts which attended the formation of Zambia affect its post-Independence life? We can see that Zambia's precarious national identity fragmented rapidly following the transition to Independence. Zambia has spent the years since 1964 en-

trapped in a “mythic cycle” repeating a pattern of conflict, crisis and catharsis. Each turn of the cycle is somewhat different from the previous turn, but it nevertheless follows an identifiable pattern with its climax in an act of vilification and expulsion. Cyclical patterns of this sort may well eventually become mythologised through time and repetition, although this has not happened in the case of Zambia as yet. This, we have argued, is not entirely unexpected given the nature of Zambia's transformation and conflictual history.

A further conclusion which is beginning to emerge from the discussions in the past two chapters is the way in which the cyclical patterns we have discerned create an entrapment in what Wink terms the “Domination System”, an enslavement to the “Powers”. These patterns are without hope simply because they are cyclical, entrapping all in a repetition in one form or another of the patterns of failure and crisis of the past. Individuals and communal entities “take roles” in a kaleidoscopic pattern, their identities emerging out of the pattern. They are not truly “individualised”, that is they have no identity of their own, but rather they appropriate desire and identity from that which is logically prior to themselves. This is something inherent in Girard’s theory. In exploring the Gospel insight into the mimetic cycle Girard asks why the Gospels have recourse to the figure of Satan rather than to an impersonal principle. Girard argues that it is because humans have no insight into the reality of their entrapment in a circular process. He continues:

> [T]he real manipulator of the process is *mimetic contagion itself*. There is no real subject within this mimetic contagion, and that is finally the meaning of the title "prince of this world", if it is recognized that Satan is the absence of being.[37]

[37] Ibid., 69. Italics original.

Humans as individuals or as members of communities are entrapped in "an absence of being", of non-identity; they are not, and cannot truly be themselves. For Volf, even the oppressed can claim no innocence, which involves a recognition of what Paul meant when he claimed that "All have sinned and fallen short".[38] Without the recognition that all are in need of repentance, without a "politics of the pure in heart",[39] any effort at liberation will fail, perpetuating rather than ending the mimetic cycle. This is precisely what has happened in Zambia, Efforts of liberation have all "fallen short" because they have all been shaped, or rather emptied, by mimetic conflict. The movements of liberation, either as the U.N.I.P. or the M.M.D., have appropriated identities which were logically prior to their own existence and exist only as a coalition of many against one. In themselves these movements have no "true" or unique identity of their own.

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus tells the story of the "Prodigal Son", the story of a repentant sinner.[40] The son wishes to "displace" the father, taking that which is to be only properly his at the death of his father, and leaves the family home. In a "far country" he indulges in the mimesis of false and meaningless desires, frittering away his inheritance in "dissolute living". When his money is gone and famine hits that land he is still trapped in mimesis, hiring himself out to "one of the citizens of that country", a faint echo of his true self, even wishing to have the rubbish fed to the pigs as food. The moment of realisation is described briefly in the story as the moment "when he came to himself." He has been trapped, his life shaped by the "non-being" of mimetic rivalry until "he comes to himself". There is more to the story than this, but for our

[38] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 85.
[39] Ibid., 119.
[40] Luke 15:11-32

purposes it is enough to consider the moment in which “he came to himself”. At this moment he turns from the meaningless mimesis of rivalry and finds his true identity of “this my son” as a gift from the father.

We have yet to account for how we, as human beings might “come to ourselves”, freed from entrapment in the “non-being” of the mimetic cycle. The entrapment seems inevitable in Girard's theory, as there is no “self” to come to which exists without mimesis, and thus every human is sucked into the mimetic cycle of rivalry, conflict and catharsis. In order to do so, we will have to carry out our theological reflection, which will include an examination of Girard's understanding of Christianity. There is yet one more intervening step to take before this can be done however, and that is to examine the state of Zambia at the time of writing, or at least as close to the time of writing as one can get. We do so in an effort to answer two questions. First, are there indications that the cyclical pattern we have discerned continues to be reiterated? Second, if so, what are the patterns within society which indicate this? Once we have achieved this task, we may move on to carry out our theological reflection.

6 Zambia in the 21st Century - The Politics of Predation

Through previous chapters we have argued that Zambia was established as a nation through mimetic conflict culminating in the expulsion of the colonial power as "victim" or scapegoat. The national identity thus created was, however, precarious and began to fragment. Subsequent post-Independence history shows the founding events to have become a template for a cyclical pattern of conflict, fragmentation and expulsion. In this pattern neither individuals or communities have an identity which is properly theirs. Instead they appropriate identity through the conflictual mimesis of others, taking on "roles" in the pattern. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the current state of Zambia, or as close to the current state as it is possible to get, given that the academic observer is always, of necessity, at least two steps behind events. In our examination we shall focus particularly on evidence which points to the recurrence of the mimetic cycle. If this evidence is available then it should be possible to form an educated opinion as to where in this cycle Zambia is today. We carry this out in order to understand the society with which the Church must engage in its mission to bear witness to the Good News of God in Jesus Christ. We begin with an examination of the role of the President in the mimetic cycle.

6.1 Institutional Charismatic Presidency and the Mythic Cycle

According to Girard the institution of sacred monarchy originated from the practice of designating the next cultic victim in advance. Girard suggests that this is a slow and cumulative process. The designated victim is kept until his sacrifice is necessary. His setting apart casts an aura of sacredness and divine power over him, which in turn makes him an alluring figure. Little by little this comes to be forged into political power as commanding potential victims gather supporters and divert the projection of communal rivalries from themselves onto alternative scapegoats.[1] Yet the potential victim remains a potential victim. In times of crisis support may be withdrawn, diversion fail and the sacrifice takes place.[2]

The strongly centralized Zambian state and the "institutional charismatic" nature of the presidency leaves the President in much the same position as an ancient sacred king. He is an isolated figure, set apart by the office and its trappings from the vast majority of Zambians. Living in a grand Versailles in the midst of a park complete with antelope and other small game, escorted and cosseted everywhere, his face smiling benignly down in every public building, the President is the “Father” of the nation, Head of State and Head of Government. He is the designated model/rival/scapegoat for every aspiring Zambian. The Presidential election is simply an ostensibly democratic means of designating the next victim upon whom the failures and tensions of Zambian society will be projected.

1 Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 92.
2 Fleming, *René Girard*, 60.

The prestige and power, the adulation and pleasures of comfort and wealth which accompany the office, are all vestiges of the "good times" granted to the sacrificial victim prior to his or her immolation.[3] They also make the President an alluring model, whose very possession of the office casts a cloak of fascination over it, making it desirable and setting the conditions for rivalry. So Presidents go about the business of gathering supporters and diverting attention onto alternative victims in order to gain and maintain their hold upon the office. At the same time the Single Victim Mechanism ensures that their rule eventually comes to an end in some form of sacrificial crisis. Support for the President leaches away and gathers to another, who takes his role, and thus the cycle begins again.

Insecurity heightens short-term and conflictual approaches as individuals and groups seek to secure themselves against the threat of up-and-coming rivals. Identity becomes more narrowly and exclusively defined, empathy is withdrawn, resorting to the single victim becomes more prevalent, and cycles of conflict are perpetuated and intensified. The mythic cycle has thus entrapped successive Presidents in what Robert Bates calls "predatory behaviour".[4] Presidents have walked the high wire between power and expulsion, and have been irresistibly tempted to the immediate short-term pay-offs of predation in the face of the precarious nature of their tenure.[5] As each new contestant for the Presidential office is drawn into a conflict to supplant

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3 Ibid., 59.

4 Robert H. Bates, *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (Pbk. edn.), 2008), 10-15.

5 Jan Kees van Donge, "The plundering of Zambian resources by Frederick Chiluba and his friends: A case study of the interaction between national politics and the international drive towards good governance," *African Affairs (London)* 108, no. 430 (January 1, 2009): 69.

the model, he becomes the mimetic double of the rival/model. As the mimetic image of the predecessor each new president fills the role in much the same way as the predecessor, repeating the patterns of the past.

Each incumbent to a greater or lesser extent has misused, even straightforwardly stolen, public wealth and abused power and patronage with contemptuous freedom in order to secure the well-being of himself and a few select allies, relatives and co-conspirators. Each has sought to acquire and cling to power for as long as possible in order to retain the fruits of office and avoid retribution from potential successors. All have attempted to maintain their position by diverting attention away from themselves onto a variety of alternative scapegoats, usually associated with opposing or disaffected ethnic groups. This in turn has tended to harden ethnic identities as individuals and groups perceive themselves as excluded from the benefits of the political economy on the basis of their ethnicity.

It is the mimetic mechanism which drives this cycle. Presidents, as powerful as they may seem, as alluring and attractive as their office may be, are as much prisoners of their role, of the non-being at the heart of the mimetic cycle, as anyone else in Zambia. Thus the mimetic cycle implants instability and rivalry into the very core and focus of the national identity. To see further indications of Zambia's entrapment in the mimetic cycle we must now turn to an examination of the State of Zambia in the early years of the 21st century.

6.2 The State of Zambia In The Early 21st Century

6.2.1 A Brief Political Background

After the elections of 2001 Zambia experienced a period of economic growth as a result of increasing copper prices. Until the "credit crunch" of 2008 it was thought that this growth would continue unabated for a considerable period.[6] This meant that towards the end of Mwanawasa's first term there was a sense of optimism, particularly amongst those with urban business interests, with newspapers reporting increasing investment in the mines and offering hopeful editorials.[7]

The optimism was enhanced when Zambia completed the conditions for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (H.I.P.C.) for debt relief,[8] reducing Zambia's international debt from $6.7 billion to $502 million.[9] Early in 2006 the Kwacha appreciated against the main international trading currencies, largely on the back of inward investment and the freeing-up of funds consequent upon the successful completion of the HIPC programme.[10]

Not everyone, however, felt that they had benefited from this improvement in economic well-being. Copperbelt miners were frustrated by poor pay, deteriorating employment conditions and declining safety standards driven by the demand for profits

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6 Miles Larmer and Alastair Fraser, "Of Cabbages and King Cobra: Populist Politics and Zambia's 2006 election," *African Affairs (London)* 106, no. 425 (October 1, 2007): 618.

7 Business Post October 25th 2005 "*$1BN pumped into mines"* and the editorial on the same date.

8 "Economic Policy and Debt - (HIPC) The Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative," n.d., http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTDEBTDEPT/0,,contentMDK:20260411~menuPK:64166739~pagePK:64166689~piPK:64166646~theSitePK:469043,00.html (Accessed 11 September, 2009).

9 Larmer and Fraser, "Of Cabbages and King Cobra: Populist Politics and Zambia's 2006 election," 619.

10 Ibid.

from the major multinational mining companies.[11] The strengthening of the currency also caused an increase in costs which threatened a diverse range of "non-traditional export" sectors, including agricultural and flora-culture exporters and the tourism industry, all of which traditionally struggled in competition with more lower-cost environments in South Africa and Kenya.

Despite the ambivalent atmosphere, Mwanwasa won the 2006 elections, which were widely accepted as fair and free.[12] The United Party for National Development (U.P.N.D.) had formed a coalition with a number of other opposition parties under the title United Democratic Alliance (U.D.A.). The Alliance was politically wounded by the death of the U.P.N.D. leader Anderson Mazoka and the emergence of the little-known Hakainde Hichelema, the new U.P.N.D. president, as its Presidential candidate. The U.P.N.D. had declared that only a Tonga should be Party President[13] which tied the party ever more firmly to the Southern Province and ethnic Tonga vote. Overall the U.D.A. was only effective in the south and west. The baton of main opposition was therefore passed to the Patriotic Front party founded and lead by Michael Sata. Sata took an early lead in the Presidential elections but eventually lost as rural votes were counted.[14] Sata's defeat sparked a short spell of violence in both Lusaka and the Copperbelt as both he and his supporters claimed electoral fraud.[15]

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11 Ibid., 618.
12 Ibid., 620.
13 Nomusa Michelo "Hichelema Speaks out on U.P.N.D. Presidency" *Post* Wednesday June 14th 2006,
14 Larmer and Fraser "*Of Cabbages and King Cobra"*, 623.
15 "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Violence as Zambia awaits results," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/5398252.stm (Accessed 14 April, 2009). Accessed 14 April 2009.

Over the next two years Zambia continued to experience economic growth, largely as a result of the Chinese economy's voracious appetite for raw materials. Mwanawasa was widely admired for the record of his Government on both the economy and on governance. As the economy grew, however, so did frustration with the inequity of distribution of its benefits. The multinational mining companies might be making new investments and posting record profits,[16] but in their own perception Zambians were neither earning record wages nor profiting from the investment in new equipment brought from outside the country, and there was an ongoing rumble of discontent in the industrial workforce.

Zambia's mineral taxation régime has been one of the lowest in Africa, giving the mining companies breaks in company tax, import duties and a very low mineral royalty. The régimes were negotiated with the mining companies during the processes of privatization, and are covered by a series of "Development Agreements" negotiated under a great deal of pressure from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (often referred to collectively as the Bretton Woods Institutions).[17] In April 2008 the Government imposed a new régime which it predicted would bring in revenues of $415 million.[18] Mining companies, however, were reluctant to pay the new taxes,

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16 "First Quantum Minerals Ltd. - Financial Highlights - Mon Apr 20, 2009," n.d., http://www.first-quantum.com/s/FinancialHighlights.asp (Accessed 20 April, 2009). Accessed 20 April 2009.

17 Alastair Fraser and John Lungu, "For Whom the Windfalls? Winners and Losers in the Privatisation of Zambia's Copper Mines" (minewatchzambia.com, n.d.), 11, http://www.minewatchzambia.com/reports/report.pdf (Accessed 9 April, 2009). Accessed 09 April 2009.

18 "Zambia president axes copper mine tax breaks - Forbes.com," n.d., http://www.forbes.com/feeds/afx/2008/01/11/afx4520855.html (Accessed 9 April, 2009); "Zambia still on course for $415 million mine tax target | LusakaTimes.com," n.d., http://www.lusakatimes.com/?p=2860 (Accessed 9 April, 2009).
"Zambia president axes copper mine tax breaks - Forbes.com"; "Zambia still on course for $415 million mine tax target | LusakaTimes.com." (Accessed 9 April 2009)

claiming that the "Development Agreements" locked the Government into the original terms for 15 or 20 years. Given the profits involved, there was little sympathy for their case, particularly within Zambia, and the new tax regime was implemented.[19]

Just prior to the African Union Summit at Sharm-al-Sheikh in Egypt in June 2008 President Mwanawasa suffered a stroke. He died the following August at the Mercy Military Hospital in Paris.[20] This precipitated a Presidential By-Election in November 2008. The internal M.M.D. Party contest was won by the sitting Vice President, Ruphia Banda, who duly went on to win the national presidential by-election. This was essentially a two-horse race between Banda and Michael Sata. Hichelema had still failed to escape both his relative political inexperience and his party's perceived ethnocentrism. The U.N.I.P. fielded no candidate and the Heritage Party's Godfrey Miyanda hardly registered at the polls. As with the 2006 elections the urban vote put Sata far ahead and Banda could only claim to have been victorious after a considerable wait for the declaration of results from the remote rural constituencies. Again there was some short-lived post-election violence, this time largely confined to the Copperbelt city of Kitwe.

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[19] Fraser and Lungu, "For whom the Windfalls?," 2. Accessed 09 April 2009; Abi Dymond, Kato Lambrechts, and Simon Chase, "Undermining Development?" (Action for Southern Africa, n.d.), 7, http://www.actsa.org/Pictures/UpImages/pdf/Undermining%20development%20report.pdf (Accessed 9 April, 2009). Accessed 09 April 2009.

[20] "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Zambia president 'suffers stroke'," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7480559.stm (Accessed 13 April, 2009). Accessed 13 April 2009; "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Zambia's president dies in France," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7570285.stm (Accessed 13 April, 2009). Accessed 13 April 2009."BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Zambia president 'suffers stroke'." Accessed 13 April 2009; "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Zambia's president dies in France." Accessed 13 April 2009.

As the "credit crunch" deepened into global recession, the price of copper on the London Metal Exchange declined, driving the Zambian economy into economic gloom. Employment in the mining industry declined drastically, with some mines threatened with complete closure and the Government going so far as to consider re-nationalisation and re-sale of mines which had been closed.[21]

6.2.2 Resorting to the Scapegoat: Small Stones in a Large Landslide

Despite its economic hardships Zambia gives the appearance of relative stability. It suffers, like any other society, from crime and corruption, but the crime rates are not as high as in South Africa, the corruption not as obviously all pervasive as in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the political instability and oppression not as critical as in Zimbabwe. Beneath the surface, however, there are signs of profound tension and conflict which issue in many localised resorts to the Single Victim Mechanism.

Zambia suffers from a wide range of diseases. Malaria and tuberculosis are endemic and there are regular cholera epidemics during the rainy season. 2008/9 was an especially bad season, and there are indications that there is a link between the extent of the outbreaks and climate change.[22] Zambia also still suffers from a high level of HIV

[21] "BBC NEWS | Business | Zambian miners hit by copper slump," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/7920945.stm (Accessed 6 March, 2009). Accessed 06 March 2009; "BBC NEWS | Business | Zambian mine lays off 1,300 staff," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/7992500.stm (Accessed 11 April, 2009). Accessed 06 March 2009; "Zambia to nationalise ailing foreign-owned mines - Mail & Guardian Online: The smart news source," n.d., http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-01-07-zambia-to-nationalise-ailing-for-eignowned-mines (Accessed 3 April, 2009). Accessed 06 March 2009; Mukula Mukula, "KCM, Non-Ferrous frontrunners in LCM Purchase," April 14, 2009, http://www.daily-mail.co.zm/media/news/viewnews.cgi?category=3&id=1239691499 (Accessed 14 April, 2009). Accessed 06 March 2009.

[22] "afrol News - Climate change increases Zambia cholera numbers," n.d., http://www.afrol.com/articles/33119 (Accessed 15 May, 2009). Accessed 15 May 2009; "MSF Responds to Serious Cholera Outbreak in Zambia (1/22/09) | Doctors Without Borders," n.d., http://doctorswithoutborders.org/news/article.cfm?id=3392&cat=field-news (Accessed 15 May, 2009). Accessed 15 May 2009; "Zambia's cholera death toll hits 28 - Mail & Guardian Online: The smart news source," n.d., http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-01-13-zambias-chol-

infection, which leaves people more vulnerable to disease. There are a series of genetic scourges, such as sickle cell disease, and "life-style" diseases, like blood pressure and diabetes, caused by a combination of genetics and inappropriate nutrition. These factors contribute to an overall lowering of life expectancy. At the time of writing the average life expectancy at birth in Zambia was 38 years, with only 2.3% of the population over sixty-five.[23]

Girard notes that for many societies physical disease and the contagion of mimetic rivalry are difficult to distinguish.[24] This is entirely consistent with Zambian society. As with most Bantu cultures Zambians are prone to interpreting any misfortune as being due to the malevolent actions of some spiritual being or due to witchcraft practised against them. Zambians are able to integrate this view with modern understandings of causation and see little inconsistency in turning to both the traditional *ng'anga* and Western medicine for healing in times of illness.

That the population often turns to traditional African forms of healing and witchcraft detection is evidenced by the large number of advertisements, both on the roadsides and in the classified columns of all the daily national newspapers, for a variety of "doctors" offering traditional remedies for a range of ailments and problems or promising to ensure all kinds of achievement and success. At the same time Westernisation is having its effect and the same population crowds into the public clinics and hospitals or queues in the pharmacy to obtain Western treatment and medicine. The fact that the clinics and hospitals are often without medicine, vital equipment and

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era-death-toll-hits-28 (Accessed 15 May, 2009). Accessed 15 May 2009.

23 "CIA - The World Factbook -- Zambia." Accessed 15 April 2009.

24 Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 8, 32; Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 52.

trained staff means that often the treatments are poorly implemented, inappropriate or simply not available. Torn between traditional and Western medicine, the average Zambian finds little hope or healing from either.

Lusaka is neither Johannesburg nor Nairobi, but crime is a major problem for many Zambians.[25] In most stable societies the criminal becomes an object of the "legitimate violence" of the State in the form of the legal system. The criminal is designated by accepted mechanisms of accusation, trial and judgement, and punished in ways which are in accordance with a system of standards and precedence which wider society believes to deliver some measure of "justice", however ill-defined that may be. The whole process, especially that part which occurs before the courts, is invested with considerable "majesty" and authority. Retribution is therefore meted out in such a way that tension is discharged while the possibility of response from the criminal's allies or relatives is reduced, lessening the possibility of further conflict.[26]

Much, inevitably, depends upon how deeply society as a whole has invested in and affirmed its legal mechanisms, which in turn depends upon the stability of the wider social identity. A well-supported and respected legal system in which accusations are carefully investigated, judgements credible and the punishment seen to be appropriate can be an effective instrument in maintaining social peace. A legal system held in disrepute will encourage the populace to deal with crime in other ways. In Zambia

[25] "NationMaster - South African Crime statistics," n.d., http://www.nationmaster.com/red/country/sf-south-africa/cri-crime&all=1 (Accessed 29 August, 2009). Accessed 29 August 2009; "NationMaster - Zambian Crime statistics," n.d., http://www.nationmaster.com/red/country/za-zambia/cri-crime&all=1 (Accessed 29 August, 2009). Accessed 29 August 2009.

[26] Bailie, *Violence Unveiled*, 55-58, 85.

the legal system is slow, cumbersome, arbitrary and widely believed to be corrupt. Any kind of adequate legal advice or representation is far beyond the means of most ordinary Zambians.

Patterns of family life are also unstable, with marital failure, infidelity and domestic violence all too common. As with medicine, Zambians often turn to traditional sources of family support such as older women who give instructions on wifely duties, and parents and in-laws who act to mediate or advise couples struggling with their relationship in challenging circumstances and the changing expectations of their generation. As with medicine, Government provision of support for family life is almost non-existent. The Zambian Police Force has a Victim Support Unit to deal with domestic violence, but it is relatively young, operates under hazy and poorly upheld legal provisions,[27] and, like the rest of the Police Force, is chronically underfunded, often susceptible to bribes and "gate keeping" fees. Social service provision is even weaker, with most social service support being left to NGOs.

The average urban Zambian knows well that the shambolic nature of health and social services, together with the unreliable system of justice, both civil and criminal, are parts of a pattern of State failure. Their collapse is seen as a direct result of predation, mismanagement and business friendly policies adopted by the Government under external pressure. Justice, health and social services are perceived as having become desirable goods to which access is determined by corruption and ethnic favour-

[27] Darlene Rude, "Reasonable Men and Provocative Women: An Analysis of Gendered Domestic Homicide in Zambia," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 25, no. 1 (March 1999): 7-27.

itism. In such circumstances the only mechanism for alleviating the consequent social tensions is the Single Victim Mechanism. People turn to accusations of witchcraft and unregulated mob justice as a means of discharging social dis-ease.

Accusations of witchcraft are particularly noted as expressions of deep tensions within a community. Often they arise out of social and economic changes and the tensions and rivalries which accompany them.[28] In African cultures almost anyone can be a witch – anyone with whom you have dealings of any kind, "especially those you envy because of their success, or fear because of your good fortune".[29] The witch is the scapegoat for mimetic rivalries breaking out in the community. Older people, as representatives and reminders of an old order, are ready candidates for the role of witch/scapegoat in times of particular social change and upheaval. This is exacerbated in Africa by generational rivalries whereby older male relatives usually control kin group wealth and therefore the accession of younger men to social adulthood through the payment of the bride-price necessary for marriage.[30] Bantu cultures also hold the belief that people can extend their lives by "stealing" the life of others:

> The minds of people are constructed around this myth and old people have often found themselves victims of mobs that deduce wrongly that all the elderly practice witchcraft.[31]

Blaming an elderly parent or next-door neighbour is a much easier option than actively dealing with the wide range of disease, both social and medical, which afflicts Zambian society, from the level of the failing state to the level of the failing family,

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[28] Lewis, *Social Anthropology in Perspective*, 77-79.
[29] Ibid., 81.
[30] Curtin, Feireman, Thompson, and Vanisna, *African History*, 160.
[31] *Times of Zambia* Editorial 24th October 2006

and which contributes to premature death. Those who have grown old simply because their lives have been largely lived before the emergence of the HIV pandemic, or who have drawn a winning ticket from the genetic lottery, can become a target for projection when unexplained deaths devastate the younger generation in the family. The slow, wasting course of HIV/AIDS which occurs disproportionately amongst the 15-24 age group[32] leaves it especially prone to being understood as an affliction resulting from witchcraft. The seemingly magical immunity and prolonged survival of an elderly grandparent compared with the burden of grief and fear resulting from a relentless struggle with a poorly understood disease insidiously leaching away life in a younger family member easily leads to a violent conclusion:

> Western Province Commanding officer Vaels Muzwenga confirmed in an interview yesterday that Mackson Simulilo was allegedly axed by family members on suspicion that he was practising witchcraft…"There were a series of deaths in the family and family members allegedly organised themselves to eliminate the old man" Muzwenga said.[33]

Killings of this sort are widespread, and even carried out by hired gangs of "grandparent" killers known as Karavina.[34]

The townships are squalid and neglected environments where people of varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds compete for employment and limited state resources. They are regularly racked by epidemics of Cholera. Malaria, TB and AIDS are all endemic. In such circumstances the widespread perception that the legal sys-

[32] "UNAIDS Report 2008 ExecutiveSummary_en.pdf (application/pdf Object)," n.d., http://data.unaids.org/pub/GlobalReport/2008/JC1511_GR08_ExecutiveSummary_en.pdf (Accessed 20 April, 2009). Accessed 20 April 2009.

[33] *Post* Friday November 11th 2005.

[34] *Times of Zambia* Wednesday January 14, 2003. "Karavina gang leader arrested", also *Times* Wednesday October 30 2002, "Violence: The chilling revelations", *Times* Thursday February 07, 2002. "Indiscriminate killings irk Chief Justice Ngulube".

tem is tainted means that the deeper problems and rivalries engendered become projected in an arbitrary fashion onto those accused of criminal activity. The result is "mob justice", both instant and lethal:

> A suspected criminal was yesterday beaten to death and chopped to pieces with pangas and iron bars by an instant justice mob in Kitwe's Chimwemwe township … the suspect was one of the criminals behind a spate of recent robberies in the area and was on the wanted list of house breakers…And residents of Chimwemwe township have vowed that they will eliminate anyone caught red handed in a criminal activity because they were tired of suspected criminal elements being set free after being apprehended. … They said they were tired of criminals robbing them of their valuables and would resort to mob justice as a way of teaching the offenders a lesson.[35]

The ready resort to projecting tensions onto these "obvious" victims indicates the uneasy nature of Zambian society. Mimetic contagion rules as tensions and rivalries ebb and flow within the community generating short term and highly fluid "mob" identities in which the normal human empathies with the victim, even where the victim is a family member, are withdrawn while a temporary group identity engendered by the Single Victim Mechanism emerges. People lose themselves in the mimetic fury and "know not what they do".[36] This feeds into the ongoing political instability. There are very few steps between the fearful and conflicted mob chasing someone accused of petty theft down the laterite streets of the township to the same mob at the gates of State House or Parliament, or between the murder of an elderly parent and the murder of the President as the nation's "Father", especially when the discourse of "good governance" can easily be turned to credible accusations of Presidential predation and Governmental misrule. The very fluidity of the identities generated in mi-

[35] *Times of Zambia* Wednesday, March 19, 2003.
[36] Luke 23:34

metic contagion make it easy for the smaller rivalries and projects to be subsumed and simplified into ever larger conflicts until the whole nation is swallowed up in the contagion and the point of national catharsis approaches.

6.2.3 Ethnic Tensions

On the surface that plague of human society, ethnic tension, seems to be less acute in Zambia than in most of her neighbours, or, for that matter, than in some European countries. Surveys suggest that most Zambians put "being a Zambian" above being a member of a particular ethnic or language group. The data suggest that there is a relatively high rate of inter-ethnic marriage. The public atmosphere condemns "tribalism", and all forms of public discourse are regularly filled with warnings about, and condemnations of, ethnocentrism in all its manifestations.[37]

We have already seen that the "peace" of Zambia is only a matter of appearance. It seems not unlikely that the surface data conceal wider ethnic rivalries ready to subsume the smaller scale tensions. The very fact of widespread and repeated condemnations suggests that there is something to condemn; that ethnocentrism exists or is perceived to exist. These are public condemnations which express an uneasy sense that any ethnic stability which pertains in Zambia is tenuous and that ethnocentrism remains, despite the best intentions, a shameful, secret practice, still disturbingly widespread.

[37] Posner, 92-93.

Poser argues that "Preference Falsification" occurs when Zambians are asked about ethnocentrism.[38] Given the strong public condemnation of ethnocentrism, it is very likely that Zambians will conceal any tendency to ethnic bias from the relatively casual inquiry of the sociological survey carried out by a stranger. Posner's use of "focus groups" revealed that most Zambians perceive that ethnic identity is of importance through a wide range of social, political and commercial spheres. It is widely held that "From the President to the lowest ranking civil servant, public officeholders are assumed to use their power to assist members of their own ethnic group".[39] This can run from finding well-paid positions in Government organizations for one's relatives and directing resources to certain regions or even local areas, to differentiation in the speed at which Government services are delivered. In such matters the perception is the reality. Whatever actually happens "[t]he widely held perception that the President's part of the country must be benefiting from his rule is much more powerful than the facts on the ground".[40] Equally, Zambians perceive that access to employment at all levels is dependent upon ethnic identity.[41] In one class discussion students at the Anglican Seminary stated that access to short-term or casual employment in the urban areas is controlled by gangs of "day labourers" all of whom have either a single ethnic or language group identity or belong to allied ethnic groups.[42]

A high value for ethnic identification is unsurprising for two reasons. First our examination of Zambian history has shown that ethnic identification, which pre-existed British Rule, was simplified and promoted by Government policies. In post-Inde-

[38] Ibid., 94.
[39] Ibid., 96.
[40] Ibid., 97.
[41] Ibid., 95.
[42] Class discussion with students.

pendence Zambia the Nationalist coalition fragmented along ethnic axes. It would be somewhat strange if ethnic identities which have existed for so long and were so actively promoted have now faded away without some good reason, and we can see that in the new state mimesis has continued to simplify and promote ethnic identification. Second there is a culturally-engendered moral imperative to support less fortunate members of one's kin group with whatever means are available. To Zambians investment in one's kin or ethnic group welfare is little different from the idea expressed proverbially amongst British people that "charity begins at home". Traditional obligations frequently manifested in the urban setting include joining with other members of one's kin group to pay the school or hospital bills of struggling family members, or sending remittances "back home" to secure the well-being of family members in the village.[43] Yet what is at one level a perfectly innocuous, even morally admirable, activity locks Zambians into patterns of potentially destructive behaviour which exhibits all the characteristics of mimetic doubling.

> Faced with the logic of a prisoner's dilemma, most decide that ... supporting members of their own group is preferable to not doing so and being dominated by people from other groups that do. 'It is bad to support a [person] simply because he comes from your tribe', a teacher in Mongu explained, 'but we have a situation in Zambia where if you don't support your own man, who else is going to support him?'... 'Bembas are supporting Bembas, so even Lozis should support Lozis ...' [44]

[43] Ibid., 102-103.
[44] Ibid., 103.

Posner's respondents are caught up in what Peter Berger called "bad faith" where social roles take on an inexorable character and actions appear as inevitable with the consequent suppression of moral and emotional inhibitions.[45] Posner's respondents use language which has strong echoes of Paul's insight into the enslaving power of sin. "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate".[46] They clearly know that ethnocentrism is "bad", but because everyone else acts in this way they are impelled to do the same. They are caught in the mimetic contagion where each group mirrors the other in an effort to secure their own position and exclude the other. The one becomes the double of the other, and the whole pattern of ethnic conflict becomes entrenched and cyclical.

6.2.3.1 Ethnic Favouritism in Elections

One indicator of ethnic relationships in any poly-ethnic environment is to examine voting patterns to determine if ethnic or linguistic belonging has any bearing on how people vote. One has to be somewhat wary of the results published by the Electoral Commission of Zambia. The EU Election Observation Mission for the 2001 elections concluded that "In view of the serious flaws in the counting and tabulation procedures we are not confident that the declared results represent the wishes of the Zambian electors on polling day".[47] The results of the 2006 elections, however, are widely held to be considerably more reliable.[48] Full conclusions concerning the 2008 elec-

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45 Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion*, Penguin University Books (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), 89-101.

46 Romans 7:15.

47 "Zambian Elections 2001 - Final Statement of EU Election Observation Mission," n.d., http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/zambia/index2001.htm (Accessed 30 March, 2009). Accessed 26 January 2009.

48 "European Union Election Observer Mission Zambia 2006," 2006, http://www.eueomzambia.org/ (Accessed 30 March, 2009). Accessed 26 January 2009.

tions were not available at the time of writing. The S.A.D.C. observers, however, declared that they were free and fair.[49] These elections were, however, organized as a result of the death of the President, and there was insufficient time for a new registration.[50]

General elections in Zambia are held every five years and are "tripartite"; that is Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government elections are held on the same day. By-elections are held as a seat falls vacant, or, following the death or successful impeachment of the President. The most reliable set of results, those for the 2006 Tripartite Elections show clearly that voting was strongly influenced by ethnic affiliation. Patterns of ethnically-determined voting can also be seen in the 2001 elections, and in 2008 Presidential By-Election. Given this consistency we may conclude that this pattern broadly reflects public opinion.

In the 2001 Parliamentary elections the M.M.D. won convincingly in the CiBemba-speaking heartlands of Luapula and Northern Provinces and in the CiBemba speaking Copperbelt Province, and lost in very few constituencies throughout all three provinces, showing a marked preference amongst CiBemba speakers for the M.M.D. The main opposition of that year, the U.P.N.D. led by Anderson Mazoka, a Tonga, won in the Lozi and Tonga Western and Southern Provinces.[51] The Presidential elec-

[49] "European Union Election Observer Mission Zambia 2006." Accessed 26 January 2009; "Zambian Presidential Election," April 11, 2008, http://www.mmegi.bw/index.php?sid=9&aid=12&dir=2008/November/Tuesday4 (Accessed 8 May, 2009). Accessed 26 January 2009; "Zambian elections deemed free and fair as opposition leads returns : Africa World," January 11, 2008, http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/239616,zambian-elections-deemed-free-and-fair-as-opposition-leads-returns.html (Accessed 8 May, 2009). Accessed 26 January 2009.

[50] The constitution requires that elections be held within 90 days of the death of the President.

[51] "The Electoral Commission of Zambia - Downloads | Elections Results Index," October 29, 2008, http://www.elections.org.zm/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=31&Itemid=78 (Accessed 26 January, 2009). Accessed 30 March 2009..

tions followed a similar pattern, with each party's respective candidates victorious in the areas where their party was similarly victorious.[52] These elections followed upon the "Third Term" crisis and while the M.M.D. was still seen as a "Bemba"-dominated Party: Chiluba having been a Bemba, and his immediate successor still assumed to be supportive of Bemba interests, despite being from a different ethnic group. The U.P.N.D. clearly won the support of Southern and Western Provinces, indicating that the country was split along the same ethnic fault line as it had been in 1968.

The 2006 elections saw the Bemba heartlands beginning to show disaffection with Mwanawasa, a Lenje. The Patriotic Front led by Michael Sata, a CiBemba-speaker, won all of the Parliamentary seats in urban Copperbelt, with only three rural, and therefore not CiBemba speaking, districts going to the M.M.D., two of these in Mwanawsa's own Lenje territory, including Masaiti where he had a farm. The P.F. won all but three seats in Luapula. Results were more mixed in Northern Province, with the P.F. doing better in the districts associated with Sata's own Bisa ethnic group. The voting patterns for the Presidential contest were again similar to the Parliamentary elections, with Sata doing well in Luapula and Copperbelt, and a mixture of results in Northern Province. With the U.P.N.D. firmly tied to the Tonga the U.D.A. lost ground in Western Province.[53] The 2008 Presidential By-Election suggests at first sight that the changes in political allegiances had proceeded further in an ethnocentric direction. Sata won convincingly in Luapula and Copperbelt, and also a

[52] "The Electoral Commission of Zambia - Downloads | Elections Results Index," n.d., http://www.elections.org.zm/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=31&Itemid=78 (Accessed 26 January, 2009). Accessed 30 March 2009.

[53] "Results 2006 http://www.elections.org.zm/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=31&Itemid=78," 2006 Presidential Results. Accessed 30 March 2009.

good deal of Northern Province. Hichilema won most of Southern Province, apart from Livingstone. He also gained one constituency in Western Province. The M.M.D. won most of Banda's Eastern province as well as most of Western and North-Western Provinces.[54]

This ethnocentric pattern of voting provoked much angst amongst many in Zambia. Former President Kaunda expressed his concern:

> Various newspapers gave us a clear picture of who got how many votes in the Northern Province, how many votes one got in the Southern Province ... but it is a clear picture of disunity getting into Zambia ... People scored on tribal lines, but that is a dangerous development."[55]

The Roman Catholic Episcopal Conference Secretary, Bishop George Lungu, was reported as having delivered a Pastoral Statement which noted with alarm:

> We have closely observed that the pattern of voting during the past few elections has been along very partisan, regional and tribal lines. We now appear more divided and polarised as a nation than we were before multi-partism was re-introduced in 1991. This state of affairs should not be allowed to continue...The just-ended presidential election has left this country more divided than ever before. How can we be a nation if we are not united?[56]

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[54] "Results 2006 http://www.elections.org.zm/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=31&Itemid=78." Accessed 30 March 2009.

[55] Katwishi Bwalya, "KK Deplores The Tribalism of Oct 30 Presidential Election," *Post, Zambia* (Lusaka, November 18, 2008), sec. Front Page.

[56] Mwala Kalaluke, "Eelectoral Malpractices Worry Catholic Bishops," *Post, Zambia* (Lusaka, November 10, 2008), sec. Front Page.

Sata is particularly noted as having campaigned strongly on an ethnic/linguistic platform from 2001, emphasizing his Bemba heritage by addressing people in CiBemba, even in the large CiNyanja-speaking compounds around Lusaka.[57] The urban Copperbelt, where Sata had considerable appeal, is widely perceived as having an historically strong preference for CiBemba-speaking candidates, irrespective of their policy or party affiliation.[58]

These voting patterns, however, do not entirely conform to a simple explanation. On the one hand we can see clear evidence of ethnocentrism being manifested in voting preferences. On the other hand Sata won support and constituencies, not only in his traditional CiBemba-speaking heartlands, but also in the CiNyanja-speaking compounds of Lusaka. Ethnocentrism seems to have been more manifest in some of the earlier elections, but a small and puzzling re-alignment appears to have taken place in the 2008 Presidential By-Election. It is therefore necessary to explore the divisions which are apparent in Zambia further in order to understand these rather complex and seemingly contrary patterns.

6.3 Another Turn of the Cycle

We have argued that the foundational mimetic conflict, crisis and catharsis which established Zambia has become a recurrent cycle. Within this cycle identities are fluid, with alliances emerging, consolidating and fragmenting as cycle moves through its various phases. We would therefore expect to find evidence of changing identities

[57] Austin Mbozi, "Should Bemba /Nyanja be the only 'National' Languages? A Critique Against the Post Newspaper Editorial," in *University of Zambia Linguistics Association* (Zambia On Line, 2007), 11, www.zambia.co.zm (Accessed 30 March, 2009). Accessed 30 March 2009.
[58] Ibid., 9.

and relationships indicating where Zambia is in this cycle at any particular time. In what follows we will argue that the 2008 Presidential By-Election results offer such evidence. We begin with a reflection upon what seems to be a widespread concept amongst Zambians, that of ethnic (or in Zambian terms "tribal") cousins.

6.3.1 Ethnic Cousins?

Zambians express a view that certain ethnic groups are "cousins" to one another. This is explained in terms of some, usually pre-colonial, inter-ethnic conflict which ended in a bloody stalemate. In such wars it was not unusual for women and children to be taken captive, the women and girls married off to their captors or their families, the male children enslaved as part of a village household and eventually absorbed into the community. As part of the peace settlement the leading families of two conflicting groups inter-married, and approved or encouraged others in making similar marriages, thus regularising familial relationships which had emerged during the war and cementing the peace. The Bemba and the Ngoni are said to be "cousins" to one another as a result of the settlement of the wars between them in the 19th century, as are the Tonga and the Lozi. There is an elasticity in "cousinage" and often it is extended to include not only those groups who are viewed as first instigating the relationship, but also neighbouring or allied groups. Thus CiBemba-speaking groups are said to be cousins not only to the Ngoni, but also to other Eastern groups. The use of the word "cousin" to describe the relationship is in itself important. In the Zambian Bantu languages "cousin" describes a more indirect family relationship. A "cousin" is one who is a potential friend and ally or an acceptable marriage partner, but who is

not sufficiently close to be reckoned as a full member of the immediate family. A "cousin" is therefore neither a direct rival for kin-group resources nor an entirely reliable ally in confrontations within the family.[59]

How well grounded in historical fact "ethnic cousinage" relationships are is a question beyond our present purposes. There is nothing intrinsically unlikely in the Bemba and Ngoni, for example, cementing any settlement of their wars, which certainly took place, with an interchange of marriages between the chiefly families. It is enough to recognize that this is part of how urban Zambians today frame aspects of inter-ethnic relationships.

The "elasticity" in the way the relationships between ethnic groups reckoned as "cousins" are construed, suggests that this is a mythologized projection onto history of inter-ethnic alliances, which while fluid and not entirely reliable, are preferred to other allegiances. The concept also makes sense of a significant and persistent fault line in Zambian inter-ethnic relationships, in which SiLozi and CiTonga speakers, for differing reasons, have a sense of being rather less well integrated into the shaky national identity and more affiliated to one another than to the CiBemba or CiNyanja speaking groups.

The way in which Zambians speak of these relationships suggests that the two main sets of alliances are liable to draw into themselves those groups who have sufficient similarity of situation and interests with the main partners. Thus the Tonga-Lozi affil-

[59] This information comes from a series of conversations with students at the Anglican Seminary in Kitwe with John Mumba who taught CiBemba to the expatriate missionaries at Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation and my former colleague, Francis Mwansa, a CiBemba speaker, who kindly reviewed the material.

iation attracts support from ethnic groups in North-Western Province, another remote rural region inhabited by groups not readily drawn to urban life. The other affiliation, subsumes a wide range of disaffected CiBemba and CiNyanja-speaking urban residents of varying ethnic origin. The vagueness of the identities and the incoherence in the alliances suggest that a conflict between two blocks has not as yet taken any strong hold, being somewhat intermittent, with both groups oscillating between strict ethnic alliances at one pole and identification with a wider multi-ethnic alliance at the other.

The next questions to be asked are, therefore, "Is there, apart from the articulation of the notion of 'cousinage', evidence indicating that there is a developing set of alliances across ethnic boundaries? Or if this not the case, do the conditions for the formation of such alliances exist?" We begin to answer this question by examining the two main ethnic groups in each of the larger inter-ethnic blocks.

6.3.1.1 The Barotse and The Tonga

6.3.1.1.1 The Barotse

At Independence, the Barotse King had resisted incorporation into Zambia, and the price of a functioning state was considerable autonomy for Barotse Province, expressed in the Barotseland Agreement (BLA). This agreement gave the Barotse kings autonomous control over crucial resources, including access to public land, the Barotse Native Treasury.[60]

[60] Pierre Englebert, "Compliance and Defiance to National Integration in Barotseland and Casamance," *Afrika Spectrum* 39, no. 1 (2005): 10.

There remained a continued rumbling of dissatisfaction in the Barotse Province, which had low levels of economic development and poor access to markets. The Province's economic prospects were worsened when the U.N.I.P. Government cancelled the agreements which allowed South African mining companies to recruit labour from Barotseland, thus closing a traditional route to industrial employment for the population. Economic development has not progressed far in the intervening years and the Province remains subject to food insecurity and reliant upon external aid.[61]

The BLA was rescinded at the creation of the one-party state and in 1991 Western Province supported the M.M.D., hoping that the Party would restore Barotse autonomy. In the event, the M.M.D. was not so sympathetic. In 1995 the Government passed a land reform act which stripped the king of his long-held right to allocate public lands.[62]

The land reform of 1995 was, however, never fully implemented on the ground and the BRE has succeeded in retaining considerable *de facto* control of the allocation of vital resources.[63] It has thus avoided demands for outright secession, instead seeking a full restoration of the BLA.[64] There remains, however, an ongoing sense of dissatisfaction amongst the general population, who blame Bemba domination in the State

[61] Ibid., 7.
[62] Ibid., 8.
[63] Ibid., 19.
[64] Ibid., 10-11.

for chronic underdevelopment.[65] There remain a variety of fringe secessionist groups, often supported by rival claimants to the Barotse throne, the most radical of which has even threatened violence.[66]

The Barotse therefore perceive themselves to be on the margins of a State which is dominated by the CiBemba-speaking communities and their urban allies, both on the Copperbelt and in Lusaka.[67] This has intensified as CiBemba has spread of as a *lingua franca* as far west as Mongu,[68] a fact which has caused some considerable debate in recent times.[69]

The Barotse are in a mimetic rivalry with those they perceive to be the dominant ethnic groups. They desire the higher standards of living and economic security and political influence which they perceive their urban rivals to have and to be withholding from them.

6.3.1.1.2 The Tonga

The Tonga live along the Zambezi and Kaufe rivers. A differentiation is sometimes made amongst Zambians between the "Valley" Tonga living either side of the Zambezi and the "Plateau" Tonga on the veldt above the Zambezi Valley. By tradition they are cattle keepers and practise transhumance, the younger men herding the cattle onto the Kafue floodplains during the dry season and returning as the rains begin.[70]

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65 Englebert, "Compliance and Defiance," 7; Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 103.
66 Englebert, "Compliance and Defiance," 13.
67 Ibid., 8.
68 The Western Province and Barotse capital.
69 "The Bemba Language Debate," *Post*, January 18, 2007, sec. Editorial; Mbozi, "National Languages."
70 Conversation with Jane Mwanakasale.

They also cultivate a variety of crops, the Tonga living along the Zambezi Valley relying upon the river, especially during the dry season, for both water and areas of fresh silt for their winter gardens as well as fishing.

Few Tonga, either on the plateau or in the valley migrated as they had alternative sources of income from which to pay their taxes. When they did migrate it was mainly to South Africa or Southern Rhodesia. As with the Barotse, therefore, they were adversely affected by the political decisions to close the migration routes south, although rather less so. The Plateau Tonga in particular were favoured by their strategic position close to the communications infrastructure along the "line of rail" which gave them access to urban markets. Southern Province therefore became an important agricultural region with high levels of "cash crop" production.[71] In order to encourage crop diversification the Government held the price of maize at artificially low levels through the 1960s, and also restricted the use of the Kafue floodplains for grazing during the dry seasons.

> The above measures were not the only ones that put the peasants at odds with the ruling party. The rich peasants in particular had general distrust and misgivings about U.N.I.P.'s overall development strategy and its ideological position.[72]

The Tonga's suspicion of and resistance to Government policy was expressed in their support for the ANC.

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[71] Jotham C. Momba, "The State, Rural Class Formation and Peasant Political Participation in Zambia: The case of Southern Province," *African Affairs (London)* 88, no. 352 (July 1, 1989): 331.

[72] Ibid., 348.

The Valley Tonga suffered one of the more traumatic acts of land expropriation in Zambian history through the building of the Kariba Dam. The dam was built, starting in 1955, in order to meet the growing demands for electrical power. As an inevitable outcome of the project the Gwembe Valley was to be flooded and the Valley Tonga living there were to be displaced.[73] Quite apart from the outburst of violence which took place during the Government's efforts to re-locate the population, the result was an unmitigated disaster. The Valley Tonga were a relatively isolated community and had little desire for any of the industrial benefits which the dam was supposed to bring. They did have a great deal of investment in their culture and lifestyle, in which the river played a potent spiritual as well as physical part. The river formed a link rather than a barrier to interchange between villages on either side, and Tonga often crossed the river to maintain family ties or to acquire suitable marriage partners.[74] As the flood affected both sides of the river the Valley Tonga on either side were re-located to different places, to the considerable disruption of social interchange and family life and to the enormous disadvantage of the communities.[75]

> Historically, the Kariba Dam, which was built in the Middle Zambezi Valley in the late 1950s, has had the worst impact on local people...Fifty-five thousand African villagers ... were forced to leave their homes. Today, most are still "development refugees." Many live in less-productive, problem-prone areas, some of which have been so seriously degraded within the last generation that they resemble lands on the edge of the Sahara Desert.[76]

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[73] Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam. [On the Removal of the Tonga Tribesmen from the Site of the Kariba Dam.]*, passim.

[74] Ibid., 49.

[75] Ibid., 50.

[76] Thayer Scudder, “Pipe Dreams: Can the Zambezi River supply the region's water needs?,” *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 17, no. 2 (Summer 1993), http://www.culturalsurvival.org/ourpublications/csq/article/pipe-dreams-can-zambezi-river-supply-regions-water-needs (Accessed 6 May, 2009).

The children and grandchildren of fifty-five thousand dislocated people still living as "development refugees" make a significant disaffected group in a population of about twelve million. Today Tonga leaders still express considerable disaffection, claiming that little benefit has ever reached the displaced Valley Tonga. Chief Chipepo particularly notes that there was little progress at all during the Kaunda régime.[77]

During the First Republic the Tonga remained a group whose integration and investment in the coalition built by the U.N.I.P. were weak and half hearted. It was this marginal position that left their leadership exposed to the workings of the mechanisms of regenerative violence at the transition to the second republic. During the 1991 elections Southern Province voted overwhelmingly for Chiluba. By 2001, however, the Tonga were again dissenting from the governing party and the national identity, expressed through support for Mazoka and the U.P.N.D. The following two elections have left Southern Province as a U.P.N.D. stronghold, much as it was an ANC stronghold during the First Republic, with no other party making any impact or gaining any long-term support.

Like the Barotse the Tonga have seen themselves as "different" and have only half-heartedly subscribed to the national identity. They too see themselves in conflict with a state largely dominated by the Bemba speakers and their allies which has not served their interests, and in the case of the Valley Tonga, has offered them no benefit in recognition of the sacrifice of their land and lifestyle for the sake of an interest said to be "national" but clearly focused on industrial urban needs.

[77] Miriam Zimba, "Most People have not benefitted from Kariba Dam"," *Post*, October 16, 2008.

6.3.1.2 Barotse and Tonga as "Cousins"

Both Lozi speakers and the Tonga have fewer historical links with the urban areas of the Copperbelt and Lusaka, and thus both have participated rather less in the core experiences of urban life. Both have developed a sense of distinction, grievance and exclusion from the wider nation. Both groups are sometimes described as "minority tribes",[78] and both groups inhabit regions which are perceived as "underdeveloped" and largely rural, with a sense that their economic situation is linked with the dominance of the CiBemba and CiNyanja-speaking groups who occupy the more powerful positions in Government.[79]

There has long been a propensity for the Tonga and the Barotse to form political alliances with one another. Both had an interest in maintaining a more "moderate" position, particularly towards relationships with the White-dominated régimes to the south, and both tended to support the ANC. In the aftermath of its banning, the United Party simply disappeared into the ANC, which delivered not only the traditional support base of Southern Province but also Western Province to the ANC. In 2001 both supported Mazoka, and a close examination of the 2006 and 2008 Presidential results show that in Western Province, while the M.M.D. were still winning most constituencies, there was considerable support for Hichelema, who almost always came second ahead of Sata.[80]

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78 Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 99.

79 Ibid.

80 "Results 2006 http://www.elections.org.zm/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=31&Itemid=78," Presidential Results by Constituency 2008 (Accessed 26 January 2009).

It therefore seems that both Tonga and Lozi are less likely to subscribe to the national identity. Therefore there is a certain amount of common interests, or rather, common grievance and disaffection between these two groups, which makes mutual mimesis more probable. This can, and does, create localized rivalries between the two, but is also a contributory condition for those smaller conflicts to become absorbed into a temporary alliance. These alliances are loose, fluid and tentative, but they nevertheless constitute a basis for the emergence of a larger block in pursuit of common interests "over against" what might be termed a "Bemba hegemony".

6.3.1.3 Urban Discontent and The Bemba Hegemony

There is a widespread sense of discontent amongst the urban workforce, particularly on the Copperbelt, which has been deeply affected by the volatility in copper prices. There are clear signs that urban Zambians are presently deeply discontented with their economic circumstances. This discontent is focused heavily upon the growing nexus of Chinese Government interests in the country. Indeed the Chinese presence is highly ambivalent. On the one hand the Chinese offer welcome investment, practical improvements in infrastructure and employment, often where there was little hope of investment or employment. The pragmatist might well agree with Brendan O'Neill's "Thought Leader":

> Last week, BBC TV's Newsnight revealed that the Chinese have a signed a trade deal with the DRC worth a whopping $9 billion. As part of this package, the Chinese will help to build 2,400 miles of road, 2,000 miles of railway, 32 hospitals, 145 health centres and two universities in the DRC…Now, if you were (or are) a poor African struggling to make ends meet, who would you prefer to see treading a path to your village? A worthy, well-spoken NGO volunteer from Islington in London ...? Or a Chinese guy in a suit wielding plans to build roads and factories and schools and in the process create thousands of new jobs?... I thought so. Bring on the Chinese.[81]

The Government certainly welcomes the investment in mines and infrastructure, as do the directors and engineers of the semi-privatized water companies seeking support for new pipes, pumps and tanks. On the other hand, there is more to the Chinese presence than much-needed road building and employment in once-defunct mines or even a water supply to the informal townships. Watching Chinese-supported projects from the laying of new fibre-optic cable to major civil engineering projects, it seems that much of the work is carried out by Chinese companies, using Chinese equipment, employing Chinese management and skilled artisans. Only unskilled labour and small contracts are left for Zambians. Much of O'Neill's $9 billion will simply go back to China in profits to contracting companies, equipment manufacturers and the salaries of Chinese employees. This has led to an increasing anti-Chinese xenophobia. Kamwala market in Lusaka has been under Chinese management since before Independence,[82] yet growing resentment towards the Chinese immigrants has led to a perception that Chinese traders,[83] benefiting from an overly close relationship between the Chinese and Zambian Governments, have been displacing Zambian

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81 "Thought Leader » Brendan O'Neill » Bring on the Chinese," n.d., http://www.thoughtleader-.co.za/brendanoneill/2008/04/24/bring-on-the-chinese/ (Accessed 13 April, 2009).

82 Larmer and Fraser, "Of Cabbages and King Cobra: Populist Politics and Zambia's 2006 election," 628.

83 Fraser and Lungu *"For whom the Windfalls?"*, 51.

traders. On the Copperbelt, Chinese companies are widely thought to have the poorest health and safety record,[84] a view corroborated when 52 Zambians were killed in an explosion at the Chinese Government owned explosives manufacturer, BGRIMM. A major cause of this accident was poor safety standards.[85] Frustration and xenophobia erupted into violence at the site of the construction of a new Chinese-owned smelter at Chambishi.[86]

The Chinese are not the only investors finding disaffection. There is a perception that many foreign companies are offering less than fair conditions to the Zambian workforce. They are perceived to be ignoring the minimal legal protections given to Zambian workers. They avoid the provision of a range of benefits and pay less than the national minimum wage through the exploitation of legal loopholes and the wide-spread use of casual labour, sub-contractors and short-term contracts.[87] As copper prices rise so do mining company profits. In 2005 workers at Koncola Copper Mine went on unofficial strike for a 100% pay rise linked to the company's burgeoning profits.[88]

Underlying the industrial agitation is a dissatisfaction with the Government and its programme of liberalization,[89] projected on to foreign investors, particularly in the mining sector which is dominated by large multi-national corporations.[90] Accusations

84 Ibid., 48.
85 "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Dozens killed in Zambia explosion," n.d., http://news.b-bc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4466321.stm (Accessed 9 April, 2009); "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Zambia miners 'see little reward'," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/6267754.stm (Accessed 9 April, 2009).
86 "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Chinese beaten up in Zambia mines," n.d., http://news.b-bc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7277006.stm (Accessed 9 April, 2009) (Accessed 9 April 2009).
87 Fraser and Lungu, "For whom the Windfalls?," 20-22.
88 Larmer and Fraser, "Of Cabbages and King Cobra: Populist Politics and Zambia's 2006 election," 618.
89 Ibid.
90 Ibid., 628.

of raw corruption are not uncommon, but more insidious and frustrating to Zambians is the way in which the Government is driven by its relationships with both the multinational companies and the Bretton Woods Institutions to provide an economic environment which is overly "business-friendly". The agreements under which the companies took over admittedly failing assets after the return to multi-party democracy are shrouded in secrecy, many never having been revealed, even to those charged with monitoring their implementation.[91] Brendan O'Neill may well be correct concerning the welcome given to Chinese, or indeed any inward investment by African Governments. The question as to whether Chinese or other investors are quite so welcome to make free with the assets of the country by the people who are said to have elected those same Governments is another matter.

The potential for tension between the Government and urban workforce is exacerbated by the power which the Government has to intervene in strikes. Even if a strike becomes "official" - backed by the union with the necessary majority at an official ballot - there is a period of up to ten days during which the Government may go to court and declare that the strike is not in the national interest.[92] This makes it more likely that the workforce will resort to illegal strikes, or else attempt to disguise their actions by calling them "protests" rather than strikes.[93] An inter-ethnic "urban" identity is therefore emerging, arising out of an industrial conflict between the workforce and the employer fueled by a sense of common exclusion and exploitation.

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91 Fraser and Lungu, "For whom the Windfalls?," 17.

92 Ibid., 25.

93 The industrial workforce at Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, for example resorted to a number of "protests" which were *de facto* one day strikes in response to being thwarted over unionisation.

6.3.1.3.1 An Urban Rural Division?

Urban disaffection and protest is not new in Zambia. The U.N.I.P. was, despite its beginnings in Luapula, an essentially urban party, finding its main support amongst the CiBemba speaking miners in Copperbelt and their relatives in Luapula and Northern Provinces.[94] It was urban protest, especially amongst students at U.N.Z.A., which resisted the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programmes under Kaunda. Chiluba was a mine union leader, and it was largely urban discontent amongst the urban workforce which made the formation of the M.M.D. and the re-emergence of a multi-party system possible.

What some commentators perceive to be new, is the growing separation between urban and rural interests. In the past, urban and rural interests were tightly integrated because of the mechanisms implemented by the colonial régime, which encouraged Africans to maintain an investment in their rural home communities. Posner argues that there still remains an incentive for people to maintain contact with their kin group and village because there is still a tendency to retire to the village rather than remain in the urban environment. Urban-rural rivalries therefore play only a minimal role in Zambia's conflicts.[95]

Larmer and Fraser largely agree with this as an analysis of the past.[96] They argue, however, that the urban-rural link is breaking down.[97] Urban Zambians are certainly showing signs of having lost, or of losing, touch with rural relatives. One Zambian

[94] Momba, "The State, Rural Class Formation and Peasant Political Participation in Zambia: The case of Southern Province," 347.
[95] Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*, 84-85.
[96] Larmer and Fraser, "Of Cabbages and King Cobra: Populist Politics and Zambia's 2006 election," 615.
[97] Ibid., 633.

when asked "Where is your home village?" responded, with a certain amount of ironic humour, "Luanshya".[98] There are many second or even third generation urban residents with little contact with their rural origins. They are aware of their home village, even of having relatives there, but have never been to the village. They may speak the language of their ethnic community only to a few elderly relatives who may come for a visit from the village,[99] but primarily communicate in an urban *lingua franca* or in English.[100] Others have little knowledge of the place their families once came from, and know of no relatives left there.[101]

Further, people may be thinking in terms of a rural retirement, but where they are taking up subsistence farming, it is often close to the cities where they had formal employment. They either move in as squatters on vacant land or as purchasers of land released by the Government. This is the case for a number of the retirees around Chambishi, in Copperbelt Province. Some still retain a foot in the urban world, renting out their township houses while living "on the farm". Others have settled in small groups which have no core ethnic identity, being formed by groups of workers on specific projects who have settled, or been settled, together. The community of Tanzam in the immediate rural hinterland of Kitwe originated from a group of construction workers on the Tanzanian Zambian (Tanzam) oil pipeline.

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98 Conversation with Fr. Sam Zulu, Dean of Central Zambia. Luyansha is a Copperbelt mining town.

99 Conversation, with Erica Chewe,

100 Conversation, with Gift Kabubi.

101 Class discussion, contribution by George Njovu, a CiNsenga speaker born and brought up in the Copperbelt city of Chingola.

Squatting or purchasing land on the urban fringes like this is a far cry from returning to a home village. These farmers have not gone "home" to retire amongst their rural kin, they are not subject to any chief, and live amongst others of differing ethnic backgrounds just as they did in the compound. Not being resident on "tribal trust" land, the disputes and difficulties in these "farm blocks" are resolved by appeal to local committees, co-operative enterprises or the local Government rather than to a chief. While they may live a rural lifestyle "on the farm", their retirement to the urban fringe is indicative of a breach between the urban resident and the rural kin group and ethnic community from which they might be supposed to originate.

Incentives for investing in the urban areas for an urban retirement are increasing, while incentives to think in terms of "repatriation" to the village are reducing. Privatization and the consequent changes in the way people perceive employment have meant that the employer no longer provides the "fringe benefits" of free housing, subsidized transport "home" and free medical care for all the family. Many are employed on short term contracts with a percentage of total salary paid as a lump-sum at the end of the contract instead of a pension. This, together with the fall in the real value of urban wages has led to the urban workforce being less able to visit or support family in the village.[102] Houses once provided as temporary tied accommodation for the urban workforce have been sold to the sitting occupants at very favourable prices, so that many now own the house they lived in as employees. Consequently many urban workers prefer to invest their "terminal benefits" in those things which will maintain or enhance their urban lifestyles at the end of their working lives. They may think in terms of improvements to their own homes, or the purchase of a nearby

[102] Fraser and Lungu, "For whom the Windfalls?," 32.

"plot" and the slow process of building a house for possible rent or a vehicle to hire out as a taxi or minibus. Urban dwellers are thus becoming more distant and disconnected from their rural relatives.

Larmer and Fraser argue that clear urban and rural identities are emerging in conflict with one another. They agree that in the 2001 elections Michale Sata widely campaigned on the basis of tried and trusted ethnic grievance.[103] In 2006, and again in 2008, however, Sata also won heavily in the poor urban areas of Lusaka, which, despite the migration of Copperbelt CiBemba-speakers, are still largely inhabited by CiNyanja-speakers. Many of his supporters are the most marginalized urban residents: taxi and minibus drivers, casual labourers, street and market traders; the first to suffer from economic shocks and the last to benefit from recovery. Sata touches the frustration and disaffection of the urban proletariat "discontent with the perceived imbalance of power and wealth".[104] His promises "to chase non-Zambians from the markets", to regulate foreign investors, especially the much-resented Chinese, to ensure that they address concerns over their working conditions and thus respect for their needs, voice their concerns and winning their approval.

Matters are somewhat different in the rural constituencies. Liberalization of food prices is supposed to benefit farmers through higher prices at the market. Farmers, however, are unlikely to attribute any improvement in their farm incomes to Government policy. Aware of this the M.M.D. has reversed its original policy to liberalize the agricultural sector in favour of subsidies and price support regimes.[105]

[103] Larmer and Fraser, "Of Cabbages and King Cobra: Populist Politics and Zambia's 2006 election," 632.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid., 634.

6.3.1.4 The Bemba Hegemony

In part, the 2008 election results support the thesis that there is an urban/rural division. This, however, is not the whole picture. The urban Copperbelt and the rural Luapula and Northern Provinces voted together in both 2006 and 2008, as has traditionally been the case. This voting pattern would clearly not be expected if Sata was appealing to a simple urban/rural axis of division. Neither can the pattern be readily explained by a straightforward appeal to ethnic or linguistic identification. In such a case one would expect the urban Copperbelt and the rural CiBemba-speaking Provinces to support Sata, but not, as was the case CiNyanja-speaking Lusaka. It appears that neither thesis is entirely correct.[106] We must seek a more satisfactory explanation of the evidence than either a straight-forward ethnic division or a straight forward urban/rural split.

The motive power for political change has been historically found in the CiBemba-speaking heartland of Northern and Luapula provinces and the largely CiBemba-speaking industrial urban workforce, which has, ultimately, the power to paralyse the economy and to bring down the Government. Urban protest and industrial agitation have brought down Governments in the past. Sata's electoral rallies "resembled, more than anything since, the M.M.D.'s 1991 rallies, when Chiluba, Mwanawasa, and Sata spoke together at rallies of 100,000 or more".[107] The destruction of cabbages

[106] Nic Cheesman and Marja Hinfelaar, "Parties, Platforms, and Political Mobilization: The Zambian Presidential Election of 2008," *African Affairs (Lond)* 109, no. 434 (January 2010): 51-76. The article was published after this work had been first submitted in September 2009. Nothing in the *African Affairs* article, however, entails any alteration in our opinion of the voting patterns in the 2008 elections.

[107] Larmer and Fraser, "Of Cabbages and King Cobra: Populist Politics and Zambia's 2006 election," 629.

at his 2006 rallies as a symbolic destruction of Mwanawasa, matches Sata's reputation as someone who is thuggish, brutal and rude.[108] The rudeness and the crude symbolism all suggest an attempt to designate Mwanawasa as the next Scapegoat.

The electoral evidence therefore supports the thesis that there is an emerging coalition of the sort which formed the core of the inter-ethnic alliance which undermined the British, the Kaunda régime and Chiluba. This is an alliance between CiNyanja-speakers, and the CiBemba-speakers. It is built in part upon social or "class" identification across ethnic boundaries amongst marginalized urban residents and in part upon language group identification between CiBemba speakers. It involves the emergence of an identity in conflict with the élites of the Government, together with their backers in the multinational companies and the Bretton Woods Institutions. By its nature it is an alliance dominated numerically by the CiBemba-speaking groups, but the sense of common identity extends to the inclusion of the CiNyanja speaking urban population.

This alliance seeks, like that of the Lozi and the Tonga, a measure of autonomy, in this case in the face of a globalized economy whose controlling interests see local interests as secondary to those of shareholders far away. In this context the story of "ethnic cousinage" roots a largely urban alliance in a mythologized traditional, idealized and simple past, which stands as a contrast to the complexities of colonial heritage and the semblance of democracy. It is an African past, with an African solution in

[108] Mwanawasa suffered a serious head injury as a result of a car accident and was, as a consequence, slow and ponderous in his speech. As a result he earned the nick-name "Cabbage".

contrast to a global economy with its foreign interests, multinational corporations and international financial institutions all "interfering", through their influence over the Government, in Zambian life.

Sata is now over 70, and the P.F., becoming impatient with his leadership, is afflicted by division and already thinking in terms of his successor.[109] The Banda régime, however, continues to be "business-friendly" in the midst of the economic storm, having repealed much of the windfall tax regime almost before it was applied.[110] The alliance which Sata's rhetoric has engendered is, therefore, likely to outlast him. Even as this thesis was reaching its final form workers employed by the South African supermarket chain *Shoprite* were protesting, amongst other things, about the differentials between local Zambian pay and that offered to the South African expatriate management, while retrenched mineworkers were making their frustrations known elsewhere.[111] This "Bemba hegemony" may well be fragile, and beset by internal ethnic and other rivalries. It is, nevertheless, based upon a set of common grievances. These are sufficient to provide the conditions both for smaller inter-ethnic rivalries over scarce urban employment, and deployment of resources in rural areas. They are also sufficient for those smaller rivalries to become subsumed into a wider, national-scale conflict, in which the object is to gain an autonomy in which the interests of the wider group are served.

[109] "C'belt cadres want convention," *Times*, May 4, 2009, http://www.times.co.zm/news/viewnews.cgi?category=4&id=1241414195 (Accessed 4 May, 2009).

[110] "Zambian parliament to abolish mining windfall tax | IBT Commodities & Futures," n.d., http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/20090328/zambian-parliament-to-abolish-mining-windfall-tax.htm (Accessed 5 May, 2009). "Zambia will now be perceived as a friendly country in terms of tax regime and it will attract more investments."

[111] "The Post - Shoprite workers stage another countrywide protest," n.d., http://www.postzambia.com/content/view/12275/69/ (Accessed 29 August, 2009); "8 ex miners nabbed for planned demo at Barclays Bank," August 29, 2009, http://www.times.co.zm/news/viewnews.cgi?category=4&id=1251528768 (Accessed 29 August, 2009)..

6.3.1.4.1 The Repeating Pattern

The entire evidence above indicates that two wider-scale groups are emerging. They extend beyond the boundaries of an ethnic or language group into a wider alliance. They repeat the pattern of conflict for control over the state and its resources in an environment in which national identity is fragile, which has persisted throughout Zambia's history. The evidence of the 2008 elections is one clear sign of this coalescence of identities, indicating the emergence of an inter-ethnic alliance of the sort which, in the past, has been the core of any coalition which has expelled the incumbent Government.

In Girard's thesis the subsuming of many localized conflicts into one larger conflict is an indication of the intensification rather than the settling of a mimetic crisis. Our evidence shows the emergence of two larger, even if for the moment somewhat vague, common identities. Each will slowly become more defined as conflict between them progresses. Each will tend to perceive the other as blocking access to the desired goods of economic development and social well-being and security. As the conflict progresses, each grouping will tend to become more settled and more attractive, drawing in more and more allies. The checks and balances of a multiplicity of contestants in which no one group is able to gain the advantage over several others are lost and a straightforward rivalry between two essentially “doubled” groups commences and grows more and more intense until the rivals cohere around a new single victim and the cycle repeats itself.

6.4 The Missing Beat

The mimetic cycle might be thought to have "missed a beat" with the untimely death of President Mwanawasa. The missing beat, however, does not mean that the tensions have abated or that the new regime has not resorted to tried and tested methods of distraction by providing an alternative to the President as scapegoat. The beginning of President Ruphia Banda's term of office more or less coincided with a major global economic crisis over which Zambia had little influence. The consequent job losses and economic hardship played well to Sata's rhetoric of exclusion and the P.F. took to street politics, further heightening the atmosphere of rebellion.[112] In order for the Government to avoid total collapse under the weight of blame for the circumstances an alternative scapegoat had to be found.

6.4.1.1 Distracting Attention: An Alternative Scapegoat

The M.M.D. coalition, always fragile, was destabilized by Mwanawasa's death. Mwanawasa's health had been ailing for some time, but he had not made any clear indication of his preference for a successor. Consequently, there was considerable rivalry for the post within the M.M.D. coalition.[113] Initially, there were some sixteen candidates; eventually this coalesced into two major factions. One was based around Mwanawasa's Finance Minister, Peter Ng'andu Magande, a Tonga, and the other around the Vice-President, Ruphia Banda, popular in his ethnic homeland of Eastern Province. Both had held senior positions in the Government. Magande was particu-

[112] "PF Gets rally permit....vows to demonstrate," May 1, 2009, http://www.times.co.zm/news/viewnews.cgi?category=4&id=1241160328 (Accessed 1 May, 2009).

[113] "Zambia's ruling party divided after death of president - The Irish Times - Mon, Sep 01, 2008," n.d., http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/world/2008/0901/1220180159010.html (Accessed 30 April, 2009).

larly well established as a potential heir to Mwanawasa. He had been Finance Minister during both Mwanawasa's terms, and was widely credited with creating Zambia's improved economic circumstances. Magande also had the backing of Mwanawasa's widow, Maureen.[114]

Banda's victory suggests that a faction has taken control of the Party which, in other circumstances, might have found it congenial to make Mwanawasa the scapegoat. Mwanawasa, however, died while the country's economy was buoyant and copper prices still high. In addition, his stance on Zimbabwe drew admiration from Western observers as well as some support from within Zambia.[115] Mwanawasa was therefore not available as the scapegoat, his sudden death leaving a somewhat mythologised legacy of good governance, economic competence and moral integrity which had elicited a degree of respect both at home and abroad.

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[114] "Mwanawasa wanted Magande (Finance Minister) as Zambia president: widow," September 1, 2008, http://zambianchronicle.com/2008/09/01/mwanawasa-wanted-magande-finance-minister-as-zambia-president-widow/ (Accessed 26 March, 2009); "Zambia's two-horse race - Mail & Guardian Online: The smart news source," n.d., http://www.mg.co.za/article/2008-09-07-zambias-twohorse-race (Accessed 26 March, 2009)..

[115] "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Obituary: Zambia's Levy Mwanawasa," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/7488623.stm (Accessed 30 April, 2009); "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Zimbabwe's crisis 'like Titanic'," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/6475851.stm (Accessed 30 April, 2009); "News - Africa: Levy Mwanawasa: He dared to criticise," n.d., http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=68&art_id=nw20080819150545866C174491 (Accessed 30 April, 2009); "World Briefing | Africa: Zambia's Leader Urges New Approach On Zimbabwe - New York Times," n.d., http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CEEDA1430F931A15750C0A9619C8B63&n=Top%2FReference%2FTimes%20Topics%2FPeople%2FM%2FMwanawasa%2C%20Levy&scp=4&sq=Mwanawasa,%20Zimbabwe&st=cse (Accessed 30 April, 2009); "Zimbabwe Opposition Faces Crucial Court Rulings - New York Times," n.d., http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/14/world/africa/14zimbabwe.html?_r=1&scp=3&sq=Mwanawasa,%20Zimbabwe&st=cse (Accessed 30 April, 2009).

Banda seems to have promised to keep Magande as Finance Minister, perhaps in an effort to heal the rifts within the Party and to assure foreign investors of a stable régime continuing to pursue business-friendly policies.[116] The signals were contradictory to Banda's subsequent actions. The election was held on October 30th, and by November 14th Magande was replaced as Finance Minister by Dr. Situmbeko Musokotwane, a respected academic economist and also a Tonga.[117] The appointment of a respected academic as Finance Minister allowed the themes of competence and integrity to be sustained while permitting Magande's removal. Magande was about to become the alternative scapegoat.

On 12th January 2009 the locally owned Zambian Airways suspended all its operations with debts variously reported as amounting to US $30 million, at least $12 million of which was owed to various statutory bodies or Government-owned companies. Accusations of fraud, mismanagement and breaches of international airline regulations soon followed.[118] The company was owned by Mutembo Nchito, a Lusaka lawyer, and the directors included Fred Mmembe, editor of *The Post*, Gaudensio Rossi, a hotelier, and the chairman of the board, Passmore Hamukoma, a Zambian by birth who holds South African citizenship.

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116 "Zambia's Banda says would keep finance minister," September 19, 2008, http://www.polity.org.za/article/zambias-banda-says-would-keep-finance-minister-2008-09-19 (Accessed 26 March, 2009); "Zambia Watchdog | IMF advises RB on Magande," n.d., http://www.zambianwatchdog.com/?p=457 (Accessed 30 April, 2009).

117 "The Zambian Airways Saga," n.d., http://www.ocnus.net/artman2/publish/Business_1/The_Zambian_Airways_Saga.shtml (Accessed 30 April, 2009).

118 Kasuba Mulenga, "Suspension of Zambian Ariways Operations Analysed," n.d., http://www.daily-mail.co.zm/media/news/viewnews.cgi?category=8&id=1231752256 (Accessed 30 April, 2009); "The Zambian Airways Saga."

Nchito is a partner in MNB Partners and Associates. He acted as prosecutor in the corruption cases against Chiluba and his colleagues, and together with his brother, Nchima, has been involved in actions against Chiluba since taking up the defence of Dipak Patel and Edith Nawakwi who had been sued for libel for calling Chiluba a thief.[119] *The Pos*t was instrumental in the case against Chiluba, and has been hostile, to say the least, towards Banda.

Magande is accused of having used his position as Finance Minister to attempt to have the airline's debts to the state deferred and to persuade the state insurance company to offer the airline a loan. All of which had the potential to cost the State many millions of U.S. Dollars. Civil and criminal proceedings were instituted against Nchito, along with a number of others, including the Director of the Bank of Zambia, Caleb Fundanga.

There have been demands for Magande to be suspended from Parliament,[120] for him to appear before a tribunal charged with breach of the Parliamentary and Ministerial Codes of Conduct or to be prosecuted. These demands have the air of orchestration, coming as they do, from within the Party, some made by senior officers in various Party organizations and local branches. He is being investigated by the Anti-Corruption Commission, and may yet face the relevant tribunal or prosecution.[121] Behind this is an attempt to obliquely scapegoat the late President who relied upon Magande for over seven years as finance minister. Hints of this are in the prolonged account of

[119] van Donge, "The plundering of Zambian resources by Frederick Chiluba," 75.
[120] "Zambia: 'Suspend Magande'," March 10, 2009, http://allafrica.com/stories/200903100393.html (Accessed 26 March, 2009).
[121] "CJ Awaits Magande Probe," n.d., http://www.zamnet.zm/newsys/news/viewnews.cgi?category=3&id=1240987357 (Accessed 30 April, 2009); "Magande should be prosecuted, says Lifwekelo," n.d., http://www.times.co.zm/news/viewnews.cgi?category=4&id=1238044660 (Accessed 26 March, 2009)..

the affair put forward by *The Times of Zambia.* The point is introduced when readers are reminded that Nchito was "handpicked by the late President, Levy Patrick Mwanawasa" and reinforced clearly when the report states:

> Trouble seemed to have started when President Levy Mwanawasa died. Mwanawasa on the one hand and Fred Mmembe, Mutembo Nchito and Mark Chona were close allies in an "unholy alliance" in "the fight against corruption". This relationship seems to have cost Zambia a huge loss of USD 29 million.[122]

The accusations against the supposed conspirators to defraud became more bizarre. Nchito and Mmembe, were accused of plotting to have President Banda impeached. The plan, it was claimed was to represent all Government contracts as "corruption scandals", which *The Post* would then publicise the scandals thus encouraging opposition MP's together with disaffected members of the M.M.D. to combine in order to move a motion of impeachment.[123] This accusation has distinct overtones of those paranoid years of "the emergency" during Chiluba's régime, with all its plots and coup attempts.

It is impossible, and unnecessary, at the time of writing, to determine if any of the accusations against Magande or the Directors of Zambia Airways have any real substance. Innocent or guilty, Magande is an obvious substitute for Mwanawasa, the more so if it can be hinted that he and his fellow conspirators were once cloaked by the power and patronage of the President. No more need be said about Mwanawasa,

[122] "The Zambian Airways Saga."
[123] Ibid.

who can now vanish behind the scapegoat, his reputation for integrity and good governance untarnished, or at least unexamined while he remains a powerful emotive memory in people's minds.

The paranoid nature of the accusations, the orchestrated campaign against Magande, the way in which the web of deceit and theft mirrors the complex political and business "predatory behaviour" of which Chiluba was accused,[124] all have the air of the Single Victim Mechanism. Here is a process by which the tensions in the Party manifest at the election of Banda can be projected onto Magande, Nchito and Mmembe as allies and "clients" (however unlikely this may seem in the case of Mmembe), of the late President. Like Zambia Airways, the old régime had all the appearance of success and growth while containing within itself the seeds of its own failure. It can now be blamed for Zambia's dis-ease. Banda is thus left with a clear space in which to establish himself as President without having to follow the more dangerous path of directly undermining the myth of "Good President Levy" which has quickly grown up around Mwanawasa's memory.

6.5 Some Conclusions

The foregoing account allows us some insight into the state of Zambia today. It is clear that beneath an ostensibly placid surface Zambia is a highly conflicted society exhibiting signs of considerable instability. The population, both urban and rural, resort readily to the Single Victim Mechanism as a means of temporarily discharging tensions. The widespread and recurring accounts of lynch mobs and murders of elderly family members suggest that these measures are only partially effective, allow-

[124] van Donge, "The plundering of Zambian resources by Frederick Chiluba," passim.

ing some discharge of tension, but not addressing the deeper unease to which they point. These sudden outbursts of mob violence also indicate unstable and short-lived identities in which individual actors are suddenly caught up in a temporary “mob” identity which just as suddenly dissipates once the catharsis is complete. This fluidity of identity allows the conflicts between the actors to be easily subsumed into wider identities, so that the smaller conflicts and tensions become small rocks in a larger mimetic landslide potentially overwhelming the whole fragile social edifice.

Evidence of social instability widens when we consider ethnic tensions. It is clear from both Posner's work and the historical evidence which we have examined that ethnic identities are implicated in the conflicts in Zambia. Their role, however, is complex and there is considerable fluidity in the way in which ethnic identities are constituted in the rivalries of Zambia. Posner's work suggests that the coalitions which constitute “ethnic” identity have changed depending upon the circumstances and the arena in which the conflicts are played out. The notion of “ethnic cousins” to which we have referred suggests that these identities continue to ebb and flow, currently coalescing towards two major “blocks” of identities, one representing the Southern and Western peoples, and the other the Northern and urban communities, dominated by the large CiBemba-speaking group but drawing support from a wider disaffected urban population. This second block has in the past wielded considerable economic power within Zambia, being capable of paralysing that part of the economy which generates the largest portion of Zambia's national income with strikes and protests. This or some similar coalition has always been implicated in the up-

heavals which have driven the mythic cycle in Zambia, and its emergence on the present stage is a significant indication that it is possible, indeed quite probable, that the cycle is taking yet another turn.

The newly-incumbent government may be given some grace, especially if the value of Zambia's raw metal exports increases once more and the economy recovers its buoyancy. The Governments efforts to distract attention and to project tensions upon Magande is, at best, a high risk strategy. The whole affair, with its lurid allegations of plots and attempted coups, has many of the characteristics of earlier attempts at distraction carried out by Kaunda and by Chiluba. In the past, similar tactics only served to add another turn to the spiral of mimetic conflict. It represents simply more of the conflictual mimesis which is at the very heart of Zambia's problems. What is needed is not more of the same, but new and creative thinking which enables Zambia to "come to itself". Human beings living in Zambia need to be enabled to acquire stable identities which offer both integration and flexibility in order that people may achieve a measure of security and stability within which to live satisfying lives. Behind the sociological enterprise to construct such an environment lie theological questions and it is to these that we now turn.

7 Towards a Theological Understanding of Person

Our contextual approach has so far developed an insight into some of the challenges and difficulties which face Zambia, and within which the Zambian Church is called to mission. The purpose of the next few chapters is to establish and explore theological resources which can shape the witness of the Church in the specific context of Zambia. It is not to offer political, economic, sociological or even theological "solutions" to the problems which beset Zambia. At best the only people who are qualified to discuss "solutions" are students of chemistry. The mission of the Church is not to provide "solutions" but to proclaim the good news, as St. Francis is reputed to have put it, using words if necessary. "Solutions" imply an end point, a finality; societies are dynamic and addressing their problems is an ever-changing activity. If we have from time to time forgotten this, in the process abandoning ideas of the "fall" in exchange for utopian programs of human perfectibility, the sinister connotations of the phrase "final solution" should act as a reminder of where such programs can lead us. Theology should never be "final"; instead it should always and only stand as a contribution towards proclaiming the "word of God for today" in a specific context.

7.1 Democracy and Theology

Zambia is not a "failed state" and its problems are not by any means as severe as those of some of its neighbours, but the measures used to indicate state failure place Zambia on the "endangered" list, ranked 63 in a list of 177.[1] According to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance Zambia improved its overall governance score between 2005 and 2006, but slipped in ranking to 21st out of a list of 48 because other African countries made more gains according to the measures used.[2] With no improvement in the rule of law, transparency, corruption or safety and security, and only small gains in the economy, which are vulnerable to the global recession,[3] the immediate prospects in Zambia are not good.

As a consequence of her entrapment in the mythic cycle Zambia has been liable to bouts of instability. To counter this, governments resort to the Single Victim Mechanism, projecting tensions onto former régimes and/or attempting to isolate and then victimize political opponents.[4] National identity remains weak and the State contin-

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1 "The Fund for Peace - Failed States Index Scores 2008," n.d., http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=292&Itemid=452 (Accessed 25 March, 2009).

2 "Ibrahim Index of African Governance | 2008," n.d., http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org/index-2008/ (Accessed 18 June, 2009).

3 "Just When Africa's Luck Was Changing - NYTimes.com," n.d., http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/02/business/02africa.html?_r=1&ref=africa (Accessed 7 August, 2009).

4 Sylvia Mweetwa, "Zambian Airways probe widened," *Times*, June 17, 2009, http://www.zamnet.zm/newsys/news/viewnews.cgi?category=30&id=1245226436 (Accessed 18 June, 2009); "Zambian Airways: DEC warns, cautions Magande," *Zambia Daily Mail*, June 18, 2009, http://www.daily-mail.co.zm/media/news/viewnews.cgi?category=3&id=1245305968 (Accessed 18 June, 2009); "Corruption probe should extend to Levy era," *Times*, June 18, 2009, http://www.times.co.zm/news/viewnews.cgi?category=4&id=1245303937 (Accessed 18 June, 2009); "Opinion," *Times*, June 18, 2009, sec. Editorial, http://www.times.co.zm/news/viewnews.cgi?category=3&id=1245304013 (Accessed 18 June, 2009).

ues to suffer from what Ghani and Lockhart term a "sovereignty gap"; its constitution and legal processes attract only limited legitimacy while the levels of services, security and empowerment characteristic of an effective state lacking.[5]

Evidence suggests that a certain element of weakness and instability is inevitable for those states which attained or returned to a form of democracy in the "Third Wave" of democratisation.[6] Nations which have recently democratised, and/or which are characterised, like Zambia, as "disciplined"[7] or "semi-democracies", are most likely to be unstable.[8] Further, there is a clear connection between national wealth and democracy; most of the countries which underwent transformation in the mid-1970s were generating a GDP of between $1,000 and $3,000 when the transformation occurred. In the case of Zambia the Gross National Income (hereafter GNI: the new term for GDP)[9] under the Purchasing Power Parity method was $820 and under the Atlas method $430 when it transformed to a multi-party system in 1990.[10] This would indicate that by either measure Zambia is very clearly on the poorer end of the economic range for democratic transition, therefore diminishing its chances of a successful full and permanent transition to democracy.

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5 Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 17-22.

6 Samuel P Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, The Julian J. Rothbaum distinguished lecture series vol. 4 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); Bates, *When Things Fell Apart*, 11.

7 Larmer and Fraser, "Of Cabbages and King Cobra: Populist Politics and Zambia's 2006 election," 613.

8 Håvard Hegre Tanja Ellingsen, Scott Gates, and Nils Petter Gleditsch., "Toward a Democratic Civil Peace? Democracy, Political Change, and Civil War, 1816-1992," *The American Political Science Review* 95, no. 1 (March 2001): 42-44.

9 "World Bank: Data - Change in Terminology."

10 "WDI08_section1_intro.pdf," n.d., http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/WDI08_section1_intro.pdf (Accessed 15 August, 2010) Explains the differing methods of measuring GNI ; "DDP Quick Query," n.d., http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/DDPQQ/report.do?method=showReport (Accessed 27 May, 2009).

One might therefore be tempted to conclude that the simple answer to Zambia's problems is for the Church, in alliance with a variety of other interested groups, to engage in activities which model, advocate and secure Zambia's precarious democracy and to promote the creation, and just distribution of wealth. Such a program is an attractive and appropriate part of any way forward. A Democratic civil peace is both more durable and more just than the alternatives.[11] A democratic system deals with the tensions and rivalries of society by allowing them to be expressed in debates which tend towards compromises within the political economy. Even if the debates are "robust" and accompanied by a good deal of projection, this is infinitely more constructive than the suppression and oppression of Kaunda's failed one-party state.

The idea that Christian Churches can and should influence the establishment and consolidation of democracy and general well-being is widely held. Modern democracy emerged amongst Western Christian cultures.[12] Democracy has followed where Christianity expanded in the 1960s, while significant changes in Roman Catholicism instituted by the Second Vatican Council are held to have contributed to democratization both in Latin America and in the Iberian peninsula.[13] Atheist Matthew Parris argues that Christianity must play a significant role if Africa is to "walk tall amidst 21st Century global competition" and journey towards a democratic future.[14]

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11 Hegre, Ellingsen, Gates, and Gleditsch, "Toward a Democratic Civil Peace? Democracy, Political Change, and Civil War, 1816-1992," 44.

12 Huntington, *The Third Wave*, 73.

13 Ibid., 77-78.

14 Matthew Parris, "As an atheist, I truly believe Africa needs God," *As an atheist, I truly believe Africa needs God | Matthew Parris - Times Online*, October 27, 2008, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/matthew_parris/article5400568.ece (Accessed 28 January, 2009).

In Zambia Christians and Christianity have played key roles in the establishment, restoration and the preservation of democracy. The insidious undermining of the European racist practices and attitudes by missionaries in the Protectorate, particularly the witness of Colin Morris, and the work of the United Mission to the Copperbelt (hereafter UMCB), whose missionaries George Fraser and Mike Moore played key roles in the establishment of the Welfare Societies,[15] the Christian challenge to Kaunda in the late 1980s, and the role of the Church in the resistance to Chiluba's efforts to revert to a more authoritarian system: all demonstrate that the Church as a whole has worked, and continues to work, diligently and effectively for a democratic state in Zambia.

The Church has also played a key role in education, health, and wealth creation, both in the Protectorate and in the years which followed. The missions often established schools, and many missionaries were recruited on the basis of their qualifications as teachers. The Brethren Church founded and still maintains important medical missions in Western and North Western Provinces, the Anglican St. Francis Hospital, Katate, plays a key role in health provision and the training of medical personnel in Eastern Province, while the Roman Catholic Church has played a leading role in care for those suffering from HIV/AIDS and the establishment of ARVT programmes. All the mainstream Churches run home-based care programmes for those suffering from HIV/AIDS and distribute basic medicines, food and mosquito nets throughout the country. The Church also runs a wide range of small-scale development projects promoting livelihood and food security in both rural and urban environments.

[15] Taylor, *Christians of the Copperbelt; The Growth of the Church in Northern Rhodesia.*, 42-43.

While these efforts are highly significant, increased democracy, social security, health and wealth cannot provide a total response to the needs of Zambian society. Development and the creation and distribution of economic wealth are all necessities, but, as even Parris seems to agree, people do not live by bread alone.[16] Scarcity may well become a focal point of conflict but, wealthy as any nation might be, it is the relationship of mimetic rivalry and not scarcity in itself which triggers conflict. Growing wealth will in itself resolve nothing unless the mechanisms exist to deal adequately with the rivalries over goods designated as desirable.

It might well be thought that the creation of robust democratic institutions would inevitably ameliorate the tensions and conflicts within a society. Democracy, however, has its own inherent ambivalences in respect to addressing the problems of rivalry. Canadian sociologists Paul Laurent and Gilles Paquet, following de Tocqueville, argue that democracy, and the yearning for equality upon which it is based, actually intensify the envy and rivalry within a multi-ethnic society, which in turn promotes further balkanization. They link this thought with the work of René Girard. For Girard, mimetic conflict creates, and is intensified by, a collapse of distinctions, "which becomes exacerbated the more equality of conditions prevail".[17] As inequality breeds envy, so equality fuels an equal passion for distinction, which further promotes rivalry. Democracy, like any other cultural product, is essentially a system built upon mimesis and rivalry:

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[16] Parris, "Africa Needs God."

[17] Paul Laurent and Gilles Paquet, "Intercultural Relations: A Myrdal-Tocqueville-Girard Interpretative Scheme," *International Political Science Review / Revue internationale de science politique* 12, no. 3 (July 1991): 175.

> The most powerful collective decision makers are selected through fair, honest, and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote.[18]

The whole system is legitimated and reaffirmed by those procedures whereby the decision-makers are defeated and removed from office in favour of their rivals.[19] The victors then have a window of opportunity to consolidate both their victory and on-going social stability by blaming their vanquished predecessors for any failures within the political economy, and claim that their victory represents the opening of a new era of competence and equitable distribution. This seems to be a process of blame and exclusion which has many of the features of the Single Victim Mechanism.

Miroslav Volf argues that the official narrative of "progressive and ever-expanding inclusion" in Western democratic societies conceals a counter-narrative of exclusion, conquest and enslavement which is no mere detail of history, but rather a central, if hidden, aspect of the story. This practice of exclusion was in fact the very power through which the inclusive "civilisation" of the West was created.[20]

In ethnically-conflicted environments this exclusionary aspect of democracy can result in the more or less permanent exclusion practised by a democratically-legitimated ethnic majority which identifies itself with the "nation" over against others, creating, in the language of Seamus Deane, a distinction between "civilians", for whom the state and its institutions create freedom and wealth, and lawless "barbarians" who remain on the margins of wider society as the objects of social suspicion and exclu-

[18] Huntington, *The Third Wave*, 7.
[19] Ibid., 48.
[20] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 58.

sion.[21] A case in point is Northern Ireland, where a "minimal winning coalition" of originally disparate and rivalrous Protestant groups held political power to the virtual exclusion of a large minority Catholic group: essentially a "dictatorship" of a majority.[22]

This is not to reject either the establishment of democracy or wealth creation as legitimate projects to which the Church must make a positive contribution. It is, however, to say that the prescription of "more democracy", particularly as defined in straightforward procedural terms,[23] or of "a larger economy", cannot be the sole content of the Church's missionary engagement with the needs of Zambia. The Church needs to do all that it has been doing and continues to do without neglecting to reflect upon the root of Zambia's chronic instability.

Behind the questions of conflicted human relationships lie theological questions which shape our understanding of society, and the Church's missionary engagement with it. Our methods have drawn particularly on the insights of Girard, who maintains that identity, both individual and communal, arises out of the conflicted human relationships which generate and maintain, and are generated and maintained, by society; his understanding of Christianity is shaped by this insight. Miroslav Volf places reflection on identity at the very centre of theological reflection on social reality.[24] Ethnic or other forms of communal exclusion, argues Volf, cannot take place without an exclusion from a "situated self".[25] This "situated self" is a person in com-

[21] Seamus Deane, "Civilians And Barbarians," in *Ireland's Field Day* (London: Hutchinson, 1985), 31.
[22] See Keith Scott, *Religion and Community Conflict in Northern Ireland (u*npublished M. Phil. Thesis, Irish School of Ecumenics, 1992).
[23] Huntington, *The Third Wave*, 6-7.
[24] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 17.
[25] Ibid., 57.

munity, not only in the community of human beings, but in the community of all creation, and the self we need to be is one which freely accepts the interdependent nature of our being.[26] Thus Volf's seeks to explore "what kind of selves we need to be" in order to live in social and communal peace with one another.[27] M. Douglas Meeks suggests that there are what he calls "God concepts" underlying all economic and political systems.[28] Often these concepts are concealed behind claims that economic "laws" are objective statements of reality equivalent to the laws of physics. These laws are not, however, statements of how the universe is constituted, but a summation of humanly produced and profoundly interlinked social, political and economic relationships. They, and more fundamentally their legitimating "God-concepts", need to be challenged theologically with alternative, more profoundly Christian and Trinitarian "God-concepts". The Church therefore needs to be engaged in a praxis which involves not only a reshaping of political or economic processes, but also the reshaping of "situated selves" of "persons" and the political and economic relationships by which persons are formed.

7.2 The Person and Theology

7.2.1 Person and Trinity

The most uniquely Christian God-concept is that of God as Trinity, arrived at in attempting to come to terms with the understanding that God had revealed the divine self in Jesus Christ and in the action of the Holy Spirit. This insight was achieved through a long series of interlinked debates concerning how God could be under-

[26] Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God* (London: SCM Press, 1996), 112.
[27] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 21.
[28] M. Douglas Meeks, *God the Economist: The Doctrine of God and Political Economy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989) *Passim.*

stood to be incarnate and how God could be many and also one. In the development of an understanding of the Trinity classical contemporaneous understandings of "person" common in both ancient Greek and Roman cultures were taken up, reshaped and subverted to fit the needs of theological expression. As we seek to offer a theology of relationship for contemporary Zambia we also need to take up and reshape, or subvert, concepts of "person" and "identity" available to us today in an effort to express the relationships of the Godhead. In doing so we must remain faithful to the most coherent and mature expression of the doctrine in the councils of Nicaea and Constantinople. To achieve this we first describe the development of the orthodox Trinity.

7.2.1.1 The Development of the Doctrine of the Trinity

The roots of an understanding of God as Trinity lie in the very earliest strata of the Church's tradition. Although the limits of the New Testament canon were not yet fixed, but the documents we now know as the New Testament were exerting a profound influence upon the life of the Church by the early first century. The central core of the Church's witness and worship was that "God had sent His Son, the Messiah Jesus, Who had died, risen on the third day, ascended to heaven, and would return in glory".[29] Often the very basic expressions of this proclamation would include a reference to the Holy Spirit as the inspirer of the prophets and the gift bestowed upon the Church. These became more and more settled and fixed as expressions of "the

[29] J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th ed. (London: Continuum, 2000), 88.

rule of faith", that is, teaching inherited from the apostles.[30] Citations of the triadic formula appear throughout the early Church's documents, and are especially notable in connection with baptism.[31]

The difficulty for the Church was to reconcile this "rule of faith" with the monotheism inherited from Judaism. The earliest language which emerged to give expression to the relationship of Son to the Godhead was that of λογοσ or "Word". This language was ready to hand in the Fourth Gospel and had an intelligible meaning within the common religious and philosophical language of the day. It was understood to express the idea that the incarnate Son was the thought or mind of the Father.[32]

The first use of the term "προσωπον" or *persona* in relation to the doctrine of the Trinity appears to have been made by Tertullian and Hippolytus. At the time the root meaning of προσωπον was "face" or "expression", it was used to denote the mask worn by an actor. John Zizioulas maintains that Ancient Greek thought did not have a true "ontology" of person, but rather conceived of all things belonging to a "unity", the origin and source of all being. Any differentiation or distinction represented a decline from this true origin and being of all things. Even God was understood to be bound by this "ontological unity".[33] The cosmos was understood to be "fixed" and all things, all events and actions "necessary" and "fated" to be. True freedom is impossible. In the theatre, especially in the tragedies, the conflict between human freedom and the rational necessity of the cosmos is played out. The human strives to be-

[30] Ibid., 88-89.
[31] Justin Martyr: Apology 1, 61 in James Stevenson, ed., *A New Eusebius. Based Upon the Collection Edited by B. J. Kidd* (London,: S.P.C.K., 1968), 65.
[32] Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 96.
[33] John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, New edition. (London: Darton,Longman & Todd Ltd, 2004), 29-30.

come a "person" "to rise up against this harmonious unity which oppresses him as rational and moral necessity".[34] The tragedies show that the human cannot, even in the uttermost strife, escape the fated nature of the cosmos, s/he can never become a truly free ontological "person". The "mask" is just that, a temporary epiphenomenon and not a permanent part of the human *ὑποστασις*. The tragedy of the mask is that it can also be seen that for a brief and bitter moment the human has become "free"; become, albeit impermanently a "unique and unrepeatable entity".[35]

According to Zizioulas classical Roman usage of the term "*persona*" did not differ significantly from the Greek *προσωπον*. *Persona* did have a social legal dimension. However, this more social and legal usage never strayed far from the root idea of a "role one plays", in legal terms "a role in society or within certain contractual arrangements".[36] Again this idea offers no genuine ontological sense of "person" and no genuine freedom to act outside of predetermined roles allotted and fixed either by the fates or by the State or some legally constituted subsection of society.

Despite this meaning it is argued that both Tertullian and Hippolytus intended that their use of "personal" language with reference to the Trinity should be thought of as expressing "the concrete presentation of an individual as such"[37] Tertullian in particular seems to have had understanding of the Three encountered in the economy of salvation as a manifestation of the immanent Godhead.[38]. Tertuallian's solution to the consequent tension between the differentiation and the unity of the Godhead was to

[34] Ibid., 32.
[35] Ibid., 32-33.
[36] Ibid., 33-34.
[37] Kell, *Ealrly Christian Doctrines, 115*
[38] Ibid. 114, 115.

speak of each of the persons sharing one *substantia.* Thus he bequeathed to Western theology a distinction between *persona* and *substantia* which was to create considerable difficulties when it came to developing an insight into the Trinity which would also meet the concerns of Eastern thought. Further it seems that neither Hippolytus or Tertullian managed to convince the Western Church as a whole of the merits of their clearer, more concrete understanding of *persona.* A more conservative strand of theology, wary of any language which appeared to undermine the unity of the Godhead, and confining the use of *persona* to God in the divine unity is usually thought to be more representative of "official" Western theology at the time.[39]

A more sophisticated version of the conservative strand was developed by Sabellius who gives his name to a whole strand of what is also known as "modalism". Sabellius may not have been responsible for all the aspects of the tradition, as his thought has become confused with that of Marcellus of Ancyra.[40] The essence of this teaching, whoever proposed it, appears to have been that the divine is encountered and expressed in three operations, or "modes". The Father is the "Divine essence", while the Son and Spirit are "modes" of his self-expression. These are not permanent "persons", but temporary "projections" of the One God.[41]

Both the more "official" Western theology and that of Sabellius represent understandings of "person" which are firmly rooted in the older, less ontological meanings of the term and "person" never takes on the meaning of "a differentiated individual".

[39] Ibid., 123-124.
[40] Ibid., 122.
[41] Ibid.

Eastern theology took a somewhat different route, influenced by the work of Clement and especially Origen. Both men were strongly influenced by the particular interpretation of Platonic philosophy which was common intellectual currency of their day. While the Western theologians tended to start with a more "monarchical" approach, focused on the unity of the Divine nature. Eastern theologians, because of the Platonic conception of a graded hierarchy tended to be able think much more in terms of plurality. They also tended to use the term ὑποστασις and to identify it with *persona* or *προσωπον.*[42] It appears that ὑποστασις could be a synonym for *ὀυσια* and taken to mean "essence" or "substance" (*substantia*) – the term used by Tertullian to describe the one divine nature. Origen uses it in this sense, but more often he uses it to denote an individual subsistence, that is a "person".[43] Origen attempts to maintain the unity of the Godhead with an insistence on a form of hierarchy. The Son and the Spirit are Divine, but are so by derivation, as having their origin in the Father who alone has no origin.[44] In Origen this thought tended towards a full-blown subordinationism, but orthodox Christianity, including the Cappodocian Fathers, always maintained the full equality of all Persons in the Trinity whilst also maintaining a form of hierarchical structure in their genetic relationships.

The emergence of Arianism in the Fourth century led to the debates which culminated in the formulations of the Creeds of Nicaea and Constantinople which so reshaped the concept of "person". Arius did not immediately address the specific issue of the Trinity, rather he denied the full divinity of the Word. Inevitably this raised the question of the position of the Word in the Godhead. Arius was condemned by his

[42] Ibid., 36.
[43] Ibid., 128.
[44] Ibid., 127-132.

Bishop, Alexander of Alexandria, but his teaching attracted powerful support from elsewhere and became a focus of tension within the Greek Church. The Emperor, Constantine, had recently adopted Christianity and, having finally gained control of the Empire, needed the Church to be united and at peace with itself in order to provide a bedrock for social stability. An ecumenical council was called, initially to meet at Ancyra, but it was subsequently moved to Nicaea and consequently met under Constantine's direct control. In the resultant creedal formula the Word was described as "one substance" (ὁμοουσιος) with the Father, and a number of Arian beliefs specifically anathematised.[45]

The term ὁυοοσιους was, however ambiguous enough to support a wide range of interpretations.[46] Indeed Arius himself could use the term.[47] This ambiguity left it open for politically astute Arians to re-establish themselves. The leader of this group, Eusebius of Nicomedia, a signatory of the Nicene formula, managed to engineer the downfall of three of the Arians' most trenchant opponents and to leave the way open for the revival of Arianism within the Church once Constantine had died.[48]

Those who were opposed to Arianism were split. As with the pre-Nicene debates much revolved around the difficulties of creating a concept of "person" which was capable of bearing the notions of permanent uniqueness while still maintaining Divine unity. Western theologians concerned with supporting the Nicene formula of ὁμοουσιος in the face of Arianism understood the seeming plurality in Greek

[45] Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 232. Kelly cites an English translation of the text of the creedal statement which all present were required to sign.
[46] Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (Harmondsworth:: Penguin Books, 1967), 130.
[47] Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 235-236.
[48] Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 133-136.

thought with its assertion of three ὑποστασεις (taken to mean *substantia*) as expressing tri-theism. At the same time Eastern theologians saw Western theology, with its resort to the language of προσωπον or *persona* and its reservation of *substantia* – taken to be equivalent to *ὑποστασις* as incapable of protecting the permanent uniqueness of each of the persons of the Trinity and therefore essentially Sabellian.[49]

Athanasius and Hilary of Poitiers had both been deposed and exiled, the latter spending some time in Asia Minor and thus in direct contact with Eastern thought. Both published works which were conciliatory towards Eastern theology, accepting Eastern concerns as valid and recognising the adequacy of their position. A council was held at Alexandria under the chairmanship of Athanasius at which it was accepted that the actual terminology used was less important than the underlying theological meaning. At this council the formula of three ὑποστασεις was accepted by the Western theologians as an expression of a valid understanding of the "separate subsistence of three Persons in the consubstantial Trinity" provided it did not intend the Arian meaning of three alien or distinct entities. Equally the formula of one ὑποστασις was accepted by the Eastern theologians as expressing an important insight into the unity of the Godhead where ὑποστασις was taken as a synonym for *ὀυσια*.[50]

A further significant element in the progress towards a resolution of the long debates over the Trinity came with the development of an understanding of the Holy Spirit as fully Divine. The matter had been the subject of some considerable debate, and there was significant resistance to the idea. Theologians from both East and West, however, were able to accept the position expressed by Athanasius that the

[49] Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 114; Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 246.
[50] Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 254.

Spirit was one in the Godhead with the Father and the Son and therefore consubstantial with them.[51] The long years of debate concluded in an agreed formula, built on the Cappodocian fathers' formula of one ὀυσια existing in three ὑποστασεις or "ways of being". This formuala identified *persona*/προσωπον with ὑποστασις.[52]

The Cappodocian Fathers dealt with the tensions between the unity and differentiation in the Godhead by the concept which would be later termed "perichoresis" or co-inherence. The core of this idea is that God exists simultaneously in three ὑποστασεισ. Each person is "in" the other: all that the Father is, is seen in each of the other two persons and all that each of the other two persons are, belong to the Father so that all three mutually indwell each of the others.

Western theology was given its most mature understanding of the Trinity by Augustine. His focus was on the unity of God and his starting-point was the one undivided divine essence. He had therefore little difficulty in seeing the unity of the three persons and any problem with his understanding lay in its tendency to obliterate the differentiation between the persons. Augustine's solution to this problem was to emphasise the distinction of the persons in the divine work *ad extra* leading to a distinction in the persons which is grounded in their mutual relationships.

The identification of *persona* or προσωπον with ὑποστασις is thought by Zizioulas to be a quite remarkable step. He argues that it significantly reshapes the concept of "person". "Person" is no longer a "mask" or "role", an extraneous addition to being, but "being itself" and at the same time is also the origin and cause of

[51] Ibid., 257.
[52] Ibid., 264-265.

all beings. Two basic changes have taken place. The first is a recognition that the Biblical concept of creation *ex nihilo* entails that creation's origin is outside of itself, that is in God. This in itself breaks the closed cosmos of Ancient Greek thought, making the whole cosmos the product of an act of sovereign freedom on the part of God. Even more significantly the being of God is identified with a person, with the Father. Amongst the Greek theologians the hierarchical structure first espoused by Origen entailed that the true origin of the Godhead was not to be found in the divine "substance" but in the person of the Father who is the source and cause of the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit. This in turn means that God is not bound by the divine substance – that is, God's being is not an ontological necessity, but arises out of the will of the Father. There is no God outside the Trinity, no substance that is not in these modes of existence. Because the origin and source of the divine being is the hypostasis of the Father, the nature and being of God is identified with the person.[53]

Adherence to the doctrine of the Trinity was always a little uncertain and the Church always had a tendency to revert to some form of monarchism, at least for all practical purposes, while maintaining a theoretical adherence to Nicene orthodoxy. During the period of the Reformation examples of a clear and deliberate departure from orthodox Trinitarianism can be found both in the ill-fated Michael Servetus and in the emergence of a quite unrelated radical group of Unitarians at Rakow in Poland under the leadership of Fausto Sozzini, whose Latinised name – Socinius – later became synonymous with the Post-Reformation Unitarian movement.[54] While the un-

[53] Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 41.
[54] Owen Chadwick, *The Reformation* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1964), 198-201.

derstanding of God as Trinity remained a core orthodox doctrine espoused by all the mainstream Reformers, at least in theory, the doctrine itself has had little impact or influence on common Christian praxis and piety, obliging Karl Rahner to note that most doctrinal statements from Medieval Scholasticism to the 20th century on both the doctrine of God and Christology effectively "*say explicitly* in cold print that we ourselves have nothing to do with the mystery of the Holy Trinity except to know something "about it" through revelation".[55] James Torrance similarly argues that the method of 20th century Western theological education which begin with an exploration of philosophical reasons for belief in one God have led to a situation in which "Trinitarian thinking is controlled by or subordinated to a prior 'monotheistic' or Unitarian concept of God".[56] John Zizioulas suggests that the situation in the Orthodox tradition is little different: with many Orthodox bishops and priests being little concerned with the distinctions between the persons of the Trinity and instead being effectively Unitarian, at least in common practice.[57] Thus we may conclude that up until the mid 20th century the Church maintained what was at best a half-hearted adherence to the doctrine of the Trinity. The doctrine was something that Christians should "know about" without having any genuine impact upon worship or witness. For Zizioulas this represents a reversion to the closed cosmology of Ancient Greece.

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55 Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, New edition. (London; New York: Continuum International Publishing Group - Burns & Oates, 2001), 14.

56 James B. Torrance, "The Doctrine of the Trinity in our contemporary Situation," in *The Forgotten Trinity A Selection of Papers presented to the BCC Study Commission on Trinitarian Doctrine Today*, ed. Alasdair I. C. Heron (London: BCC/CCBI, 1991), 13.

57 John D. Zizioulas, "The Doctrine of God the Trinity Today: Suggestions for an Ecumenical Study," in *The Forgotten Trinity: A Selection of Papers Presented to the BCC Study Commission on Trinitarian Doctrine Today*, ed. Alasdair I. C. Heron (London: BCC/CCBI, 1991), 20-21.

God is primarily "substance" and therefore a "necessary being" and only secondarily conceived of in terms of "Person". Thus "Person" becomes an additional characteristic, a mask, rather than the root and ground of being.[58]

7.2.1.2 Barth, Rahner and Person

Western practice was criticised by both Karl Rahner and Karl Barth.[59] Barth founded his whole dogmatic program upon the self-declaration of God in Christ. This inevitably led to an encounter with God as Trinity for the Church only knows the Trinitarian God in Christ.[60] Thus all true dogmatic theology begins with, and is founded upon, the doctrine of the Trinity.[61]

Barth was, however, wary of using the term "person" in his understanding of the Trinity. For Barth the concept of "person" means "an I existing in and for itself with its own thought and will".[62] He argues that this would lead to a fragmentation into tritheism. Instead he used the term "ways of being" which he argued gave a better understanding of what the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople meant by the term.[63]

To avoid a collapse into Sabellianism, Barth maintains that the divine ways of being are "specific, different and always very distinctive" and cannot be interchanged with one another in any way. The three-fold nature of God is "irremovable and the distinctiveness of the three modes of being must be regarded as ineffaceable".[64] The

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58 Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 40.
59 Zizioulas, "Trinity Today," 19.
60 Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics I.1*, 1st ed. (London; New York: T.& T. Clark Ltd, 2004), 296, 334.
61 Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics II.1* (London; New York: T.& T. Clark Ltd, 2004), 261.
62 Barth, *Church Dogmatics I.1*, 358.
63 Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*, New edition. (London: SCM Press, 2001), 34.
64 Barth, *Church Dogmatics I.1*, 361.

threefold nature of God is of the divine essence: God is God three times, in ways that are so different that God is only God in this differentiation. At the same time God is always the One God both immanently and in the economy. He accounts for the distinctiveness of the ways of being in terms of relationships.[65]

Barth remains hesitant about using personal terms even of God as "one" unless and if they become necessary.[66] At the end of a long aside surveying the discussion on the use of "person" and its cognates in relation to God,[67] Barth argues that the idea of God as "the One who loves" is vital, while the terminology of "person" is almost irrelevant. "The only thing which matters is that God's Word is proclaimed as the Word of the One, the One who loves".[68] This is not to say that Barth conceives of God in entirely impersonal terms. As the One who loves God is not a "thing" but a "person", the One who speaks and acts.

Rahner was critical of Barth's terminology. While admitting that the modern meaning of the term "person" does carry unhelpful individualistic connotations, he argues that the long usage of the term means that there is really no more adequate terminology. A proper "economic approach", he claims, allows one to show that the differentiation within God is properly "three-personality" and that in this context the concept of "person" implies nothing more than "what our starting point has derived from the testimony of Scripture."[69]

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65 Ibid., 363.
66 Barth, *Church Dogmatics II.1*, 296.
67 Ibid., 287-297.
68 Ibid., 296.
69 Rahner, *The Trinity*, 44-45.

Rahner does attempt to further define the concept of "Person". The language is, he argues, a "logical" explanation of the claim that God has given the divine self to be known as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. By "logical explanation" he means that one clarifies or expounds a state of affairs only with reference to that state, without reference to outside events or other states of affairs.[70] The language of "person" and "substance" always refers back to its origin, to "the experience of faith which assures us that the incomprehensible God is really as he is in himself, given to us in the (for us) twofold reality of Christ and His Spirit."[71] Like Barth, Rahner is aware of the dangers of a fragmentation into tri-theism posed by modern concepts of "person". If the language is to be retained despite changes in meaning then it is incumbent upon the theologian to explain what is actually meant by the term.[72] Rahner's understanding, however, retains many of the features of Barth's caution about "person". He carefully excludes the idea that the term could mean "three individuals" or "three centres of will, activity and of subjectivity".[73] Rahner therefore, falls back on "person" as having always meant "only the distinct subsistence and co-signified the rational nature only indirectly".[74] If this is to be rephrased properly then it can be said that "God subsists in three distinct manners of subsisting". This, he argues, is a stronger and more satisfactory account of "person" as meant by the Fathers than Barth's "ways of being".[75] It is, he claims, what Thomas means in adapting the definition of Boethius. For Rahner "relationality" could be called a "manner". The "manner" however, is not

[70] Ibid., 53.
[71] Ibid., 55.
[72] Ibid., 57.
[73] Ibid., 104-105.
[74] Ibid., 108.
[75] Ibid., 108-109 The translation of Rahner here refers to Barth's phrase as "manner of being".

something which can be seen as “subsequent”, as if it were added to a single unified Godhead. God is God in the manners of subsisting, and there cannot be any understanding of God in which the Godhead is prior to these manners of subsisting.

Jürgen Moltmann objects to Barth's understanding of the Trinity, claiming that Barth developed his understanding out of the same “reflection structure” which informed Fichte, who spoke of the “bond of love” or “reflection which permits the two to be one”. The reflection structure creates a duality and it becomes difficult to justify the role of the Spirit in the Godhead beyond a basic appeal to the tradition of venerating the Spirit along with the Father and the Son. The resulting duality, claims Moltmann, then collapses into a monad, for the Father is strictly the only true personality. The phrase “God in Christ” therefore either means no more than a reflection in which the Father contemplates and finds only the divine self or that the three modes of being are objective to a fourth subject.[76]

Moltmann may well overstate his case somewhat. Barth's understanding of the Trinity is a good deal more nuanced that Moltmann's comparatively short exposition. Barth, however, is strongly influenced by the Western theological tradition, and owes a considerable debt to Augustine. A good deal of Barth's language in attempting to understand the Trinity echoes that of this wider Western tradition. As we have already noted this tradition has always tended to understand the three-fold nature of God in terms of the unity of the Godhead, putting the emphasis primarily on the unity, whereas the Greek tradition has tended to seek to integrate the plurality of God into the one nature. It is this whole tradition that Moltmann understands as flawed,

[76] Jürgen Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom of God: The Doctrine of God* (London: SCM Press, 1981), 142-143.

and to a large extent his rejection of Barth seems to be a part of his wider critique of the Western tradition.[77] Whether he is fair in his overall criticism, or even effectively achieves part or all of his goal, is, however, beyond our present purposes.

Both Barth and Rahner have a focus on the essence or substance of God and a hesitation to identify this essence with a "person". This would be entirely necessary if the concept of person was quite as individualistic as Barth and Rahner claim. This, however, is questionable. Moltmann maintained that Rahner had not come to terms with what he calls "personalist philosophy" "designed precisely to overcome modern individualism.[78] It seems, however, that the same criticism can be fairly levelled at Barth. Although Rahner is aware of the dynamics of changing meaning, neither he nor Barth show any sign of having engaged with the alternative concepts of person which have emerged through the 20th century despite the fact that more relational and less isolated and individualistic alternatives were, and remain, available. Even as Barth was lecturing amidst the wreckage and the rebuilding of the Kurfürsten Schloss, Martin Buber's "I and Thou" was available, at least in English.[79] A key element of Buber's philosophy was that a "person" was more than an isolated centre of activity, will and self-consciousness, a true "person" lived also in an "I-Thou" relationship:

> The life of a human being does not exist merely in the sphere of goal-directed verbs. It does not consist merely of activities that have something for their object.
> I perceive something, I sense something. I think something. The life of a human being does not consist merely of all this and its like.
> All this and its like is the basis of the realm of It.

[77] Ibid., 19.
[78] Ibid., 145.
[79] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (Clark, 1970), 20. The German text *Ich und Du* appeared in 1923, the English *I and Thou* first appeared in 1937. Buber left Germany in 1938 and the book ceased to be available in German until after WWII.

> But the realm of You has another basis. Whoever says You does not have something for his object.…Whoever says You does not have something; he has nothing. But he stands in relation.[80]

Rahner argued that the doctrine of the Trinity must have soteriological - and therefore missiological – meaning.[81] Our rationale for seeking an understanding of the Trinity is to address the tensions we have seen in Zambia, to reflect theologically upon the communal and personal identities of that nation in order that the Church might bear witness to something "conducive to our real salvation".[82] The understandings of the Trinity proposed by Barth and Rahner, as important as they are in grounding our understanding of God on what has been revealed, do not sufficiently bridge the gap between 20th century Europe and early 21st century Africa. Without a grounding in a relational understanding of "person" the doctrines of the Trinity which they propose allow this vital missiological doctrine to remain imprisoned and isolated. We therefore need to engage with understandings of "person" which enable us to more effectively meet the missiological challenges of Zambia.

We are not alone in seeking to reshape understandings of "person" in more relational terms rooted in understandings of the Trinity. James Torrance argues for a more dynamic concept of "person": not simply an isolated individual, but one who finds true "being-in-communion with God and others".[83] In similar vein, Jürgen Moltmann calls for a concept of "person" in which "The modern individualistic concept of person ought to give way to the earlier hypostatic concept of person, so that the person and nature of the human being can be seen together again."[84]

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80 Ibid., 54-55.
81 Rahner, *The Trinity*, 15.
82 Ibid.
83 Torrance, "The Doctrine of the Trinity," 15.
84 Moltmann, *The Coming of God*, 112.

Our search for an understanding of "person" for the sake of communal peace in Zambia must be a search for a language which adequately describes the relationships of the Trinity while also providing an insight through which we as human beings can discern a true human personhood which is in the "image and likeness" of the personhood in the Triune God; an understanding which enables a constructive mimesis of that which is revealed to us in Christ. Such a notion of "person" must be relational rather than individualistic, open rather than exclusionary, shaped by the revelation of God as "three persons" rather than allowing mistaken individualistic understandings of "person" to prevail. We begin this search with an exploration of some general insights into the formation of a "person".

7.3 Relational Concepts of Person.

7.3.1 The Relational Person in James Alison and Miroslav Volf

A relational concept of "person" is at the heart of the insights of Girard and his followers. The "I" or "me" of any person emerges only in a mimesis of a prior other. Through social relationships human beings learn what it is to be human, and these social relationships are rooted in mimesis. We are drawn into imitation of the anterior other, learning all that makes us members of a particular society and group. At the same time we are drawn by the same mimesis into those actions which make us rivals to the model and the model a rival to us.[85] "So mimesis is both the condition of our attraction towards others and our separation from them, leading to the construction of our individuality and identity".[86]

[85] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 43.
[86] Ibid., 28.

The self and the social group are both formed by two dimensions of mimesis: imitation in space and repetition over time. The dimension of imitation in space constitutes humans as "social" creatures, who do more or less the same things, which creates society, while repetition through time enables memory, keeping the individual stable over time and allowing the development of language, which in turn creates the "I" or identity. Both belong together and enable the emergence of the human being, whose framework of awareness and perception is shaped by relationships.

As social cohesion is formed by mimesis, desire creates a certain element of individual autonomy. Desire is the "draw" of mimesis not only to the model but also to the object which the model possesses. Alison uses the simple example of a rattle played with by an adult and then given to a baby, who in turn learns to play with it. So the infant is attracted not only to the model but also to an object which is external to the model, and thus we are pulled away from the model to the external object. This leads to a third step. Imitation of what the model has, the external object, leads to a rivalry in which the imitator not only wants to be like the model, or to have the external object of the model, but to be the model. This rivalry is resolved by an expulsion, in psychological terms the assertion of the self over against the model. Thus the self is formed in a struggle in which mimetic identification with the anterior other is resolved by an act of expulsion or "self" assertion.[87]

Miroslav Volf, despite his critical stance towards Girard, accepts that the self is formed in a relationship of "struggle and violence". He argues that there can be no "self" which is utterly without a centre. The "self", he claims, is formed through

[87] Ibid., 29-30.

"centering" on the "other". The tension of identification is resolved by an assertion of the self. Volf attends subtly to the possibilities of over-identification where the self clings too closely to, and ultimately attempts to absorb or "smother", the other, and the situation where the self is over-asserted against the other and the expulsion therefore becomes fuller. For Volf both are "exclusion", an attempt to eliminate the "other". The process through which the self is formed, he argues, is one in which "humans reproduce and configure themselves by a process of identifying with others and rejecting them".[88]

Despite their differences, both Volf and Alison accept that the self as it is formed within the normal processes of human individuation is always being formed in a process of struggle and expulsion which is born out of relationships with others. Both accept that we are not persons except as "persons-in-relationship". A person is not therefore to be conceived in permanent or entirely substantial terms, but much more in terms of a malleable and relational "becoming". There is little here that is contentious or at odds with broadly agreed understandings of psychology and sociology; becoming a person through relationship is an essential element of being human rather than being "hard-wired" with a range of instinctual responses to the environment.[89] There is, however, a dark side to this dynamic "becoming". The person and the community is always being formed in relationship to a prior other, which is itself, both collectively and individually, shaped by identification, rivalry and expulsion.[90]

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88 Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 69-70.
89 Fleming, *René Girard*, 10; Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion*, 30.
90 Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 33, 36-37.

There is an element in the formation of a person which neither Alison nor Volf draw out clearly: that is the active role of the "prior other" in, to borrow Alison's phrase, "suggesting into being" personal identity. This becomes a little clearer if we consider the development of a young baby. Robin Skynner, reflecting with his former client, John Cleese, on the individuation of babies, describes a mimetic game played by mother and child which he terms the "eye dance". Each gazes at the other and reflects the expressions the other makes in what is clearly an act of mutual mimesis.[91] This generates security and contentment. Over the months of early development, however, the game changes slightly. The mother not only reflects the baby's actions, but adds elements, adding aspects of herself as a separate person, encouraging the baby to develop "boundaries" which enable her to distinguish between "me" and "not me".[92] As a child develops so the process of individuation moves on, with parental suggestion and support assisting the child in "owning" his/her internal conflictual tensions.[93] Through the later stages of child development "good enough" parenting helps the child to set and clarify boundaries and develop a sense of "self". These are the initiatives of the model, who takes steps to "give" or suggest into existence an identity in the other, enabling the development of a "self" which is distinct from other selves, including that of the model. Because this giving always involves not only the model, but a whole history of familial and cultural interactions,[94] there is always an element of "ascription", whereby elements of identity seem to derive from what is alien and external to the subject. The developing child, for example, not only acquires those elements of himself which are given through interaction with his family,

[91] Robin Skynner and John Cleese, *Families and how to Survive Them* (London: Vermillion, 1997), 84.
[92] Ibid., 90.
[93] Ibid., 98-100.
[94] Ibid., 17-28.

but also elements of identity which are ascribed by social structures and institutions: caste, ethnic affiliation, social status and so on, which are not simply "adopted" but also designated by others.

There is little in this that either Alison or Volf would be likely to take exception to, indeed it is what Alison alludes to as "parental and ambiental human suggestion",[95] provided it is continually remembered that the whole process is plagued by imperfection and entrapment in conflictual mimesis. Neither, however, explicitly place much emphasis upon the role that this active suggesting of identity plays in the development of identity, which leads to a gap in their understanding of persons in relationship and their theological reflections on "person".

Both Alison and Volf are, despite their differences, in general harmony with the more widely accepted thought that we are not "individuals" alone, but emerge as "persons" from relationships with people around us: our parents, siblings and wider community. We therefore have the beginnings of a concept of "person" which is more relational and less individualistic. A person can only become and remain an individual distinctive, unrepeatable person in relationship with others. We need to develop this thought further and in a way which is appropriate to our African context. The first step in this process is to explore the understanding of person common to the thought world of Southern Africa.

[95] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong* 17

7.3.2 The Relational Person in African Thought

The defining mark of all "Bantu" languages is the use of the root *ntu* to denote human beings, or human attributes. Thus in IciBemba the word *umuntu* (pl *abantu*) means a human being or a person. It is widely held that African cultures have a much stronger understanding of "*ntu*" as "person in relationship" than that which pertains in Western cultures with their emphasis upon individuality and personal independence.[96] This is usually expressed in modern discourse by drawing upon the Nguni word *ubuntu.* "[*Ubuntu*] speaks of very essence of being human ...We belong in a bundle of life. We say 'a person is a person through other people'".[97] Although coming from Nguni culture, the thought is widespread throughout Bantu cultures. In IciBemba the proverb *keka kanama: utuli tulili bantu* ("What is alone is a little animal, who are two are human beings")[98] expresses a similar idea: only where there is a plurality of persons, where people are in community with one another, are there properly "human" beings. Similar proverbs exist in other Zambian languages. These proverbs express an understanding that members of a community belong to, and are defined by, one another in some final and inextricable way. Seminary students in class discussion often expressed the idea that all members of a local community were part of the community: the weak, the elderly, the indigent, the dissident and disaf-

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[96] Michael Battle, *Reconciliation: The Ubuntu Theology of Desmond Tutu* (Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 1997), 36-38.

[97] Archbishop Desmond Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness: A Personal Overview of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, New Edition. (London: Rider & Co, 2000), 34-35.

[98] I am grateful to Vernon Mwaba for this proverb and its translation.

fected, as well as the strong, well-integrated and productive. At its broadest *ubuntu* includes not only the community of human beings, but the entire community of creation.[99]

The idea is deeply embedded in African world views and has profound religious dimensions.

> The person one is to become "through other persons" is, ultimately, an ancestor. And, by the same token, these "other persons" include ancestors. Ancestors are extended family. Dying is an ultimate homecoming. Not only the living must therefore share with and care for each other, but the living and the dead depend on each other.[100]

Ubuntu is an important idea with a good deal of value, and we wish to propose a critical adoption of the concept, but it is important in a quest for a politics of the pure in heart that we do not over-romanticise African culture and African values. *Ubuntu* as an ideal of interdependent human relationships can fail disastrously.

> Where was *ubuntu* in the Belgian Congo in the early 1960s? Why did the Rwandans forget *ubuntu* in 1994 and instead destroy one another in that most awful genocide that overwhelmed their beautiful country? I don't know except to say that honouring *ubuntu* is clearly not a mechanical, automatic and inevitable process.[101]

It seems we need to gain some insight into the limitations of *ubuntu* if the concept is to make a contribution to an understanding of the Trinity.

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[99] Archbishop Desmond Tutu, *God Has a Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time* (London: Rider & Co, 2005), 28.

[100] Dirk J. Louw, "Ubuntu: An African Assessment of the Religious Other," n.d., http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Afri/AfriLouw.htm (Accessed 1 June, 2009).

[101] Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness*, 36.

It is important to recognise that African cultures are, and remain, human cultures, with all the ambivalence that this implies. The concept of "*ubuntu*" emerged amongst small, close-knit communities, usually kinship groups with clear boundaries of membership and acceptability. Joseph Miller in his analysis of the rise of the Mbundu Kingdoms in what is now western Angola notes:

> The Mbundu accepted as fellow human beings only people who had positions in their lineage system, either as holders of one of the ngundu (kin group) names or as formal affiliates ('slaves', pawns etc.) of some descent group. Not to belong to an ngundu in theory excluded a person from the right to call on kinsmen for support, prevented him from marrying or growing food, denied him spiritual solace, and in practice often amounted to choice between certain death and abject subordination to the will of a patron with a place in the lineage structure.[102]

The Mbundu could accept as human beings those who were not kin-group members by the extension of kinship rights to members of societies specialising in certain activities, such as hunting. It was this extension, according to Miller, which formed part of the foundation upon which the larger multi-kin group nations were built.[103] Miller has little doubt that most of his observations about the Mbundu could equally apply to the peoples further East.[104]

Two clear points come out of this. First, the *ubuntu* as a "narrative of inclusion" also conceals acts of exclusion, in as far as the concept of "human" could be strictly limited. Empathy could be restricted or entirely absent at critical moments, allowing the outsider or the marginalised to be rejected or expelled, to suffer "certain death" or even to be actively killed by the *ubuntu* community.

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[102] Miller, *Kings and Kinsmen*, 48.
[103] Ibid., 52.
[104] Ibid., 265.

The second point to emerge from Miller's comments is the widely noted danger of so over-emphasising the group identity that the individual becomes assimilated to the group in a form of "totalitarian communalism".[105]

While Louw argues that the "derailment" of *ubuntu* in this way is "quite unnecessary" we have already seen that *ubuntu* conceals one form of exclusion. The assessment made by Matthew Parris is likely to be a good deal more realistic than the more optimistic Louw:

> I observe that tribal belief is no more peaceable than ours; and that it suppresses individuality. People think collectively; first in terms of the community, extended family and tribe. This rural-traditional mindset feeds into the "big man" and gangster politics of the African city: the exaggerated respect for a swaggering leader, and the (literal) inability to understand the whole idea of loyal opposition.[106]

Neither South Africa's smouldering xenophobia nor reactions to Helen Zille in Cape Province during 2009 suggests that *ubuntu* has led to any extension of the attribute "human" beyond strict confines, or that deeper insights into the idea of "loyal opposition" have become available, even in democratic South Africa, where *ubuntu* some-

[105] Louw, "Ubuntu: An African Assessment of the Religious Other."
[106] Parris, "Africa Needs God."

times seems to have been elevated to the status of a national ideology.[107] Over identification is an inherent part of the praxis of *ubuntu* and for Volf this is an act of exclusion.

This concealed narrative of exclusion makes the emergence of the Single Victim Mechanism more, rather than less, likely. The possibility of limiting or denying the humanity of the marginalized, dissident or outsider creates exactly the situation in which the mimetic flow can coalesce upon that one single individual whose full humanity is denied, and therefore from whom the *ubuntu* group can legitimately withdraw empathy. At the same time the pressure to agree and conform allows decisions to be "projected" onto the hierarchical leadership or onto some "cosmic" or spiritual powers. This in turn allows responsibility for actions to be "disowned", concealed behind the values of group conformity and obedience to the chiefs, kings or oracles as manifestations of the *ubuntu* community of the living and the "living dead" of the ancestors. Something of this is caught by Chinua Achebe when he recounts the murder of Ikemefuma, the boy sacrifice, in conformity to the command of their village oracle.[108] Fear and suspicion suggests that the concealed exclusion extends as widely as the ideal of inclusion and belonging, as Parris observes:

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[107] "BBC NEWS | World | Africa | Rally against Zille in Cape Town," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/8069570.stm (Accessed 3 July, 2009); "Zille shakes up SA politics - Mail & Guardian Online: The smart news source," n.d., http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-06-07-zille-shakes-up-sa-politics (Accessed 3 July, 2009); "Xenophobia still smoulders in Cape townships - Mail & Guardian Online: The smart news source," n.d., http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-06-19-xenophobia-still-smoulders-in-cape-townships (Accessed 28 July, 2009); "SA doesn't roll out welcome mat for all immigrants - Mail & Guardian Online: The smart news source," n.d., http://www.mg.co.za/article/2005-08-22-sa-doesnt-roll-out-welcome-mat-for-all-immigrants (Accessed 28 July, 2009); Loren B. Landau, "Loving the alien? Citizenship, law, and the future in South Africa's demonic society," *African Affairs (London)* 109, no. 435 (April 1, 2010): 213-230.

[108] Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (London: Heinemann, 1958), 40-43.

> Anxiety - fear of evil spirits, of ancestors, of nature and the wild, of a tribal hierarchy, of quite everyday things - strikes deep into the whole structure of rural African thought. Every man has his place and, call it fear or respect, a great weight grinds down the individual spirit, stunting curiosity. People won't take the initiative, won't take things into their own hands or on their own shoulders.[109]

In as far as the person one is to become in the *ubuntu* relationship with others is an ancestor, then the original ancestor is the ultimate model for mimesis. Yet, as many African myths of origin make clear, the ancestors themselves are people who are formed by, and continually enter into, mimetic rivalry. Thus the Bemba myths of Chiti and his brothers show the Bemba ancestors as creating the Bemba nation out of a clearly rivalrous relationship with their father Mukulumpe, to say nothing of the further rivalries that spread between the brothers, and between the brothers and the peoples amongst whom they sought to settle.[110]

Ubuntu as a "raw" concept is therefore generated by and continues to generate the same tensions, rivalries and conflicts which lead to the Single Victim Mechanism. Like the law and social hierarchy *ubuntu* acts as a break, restricting the emergence of conflict by providing a sense of belonging to and empathy with other members of the community and by offering an imperative to constructive resolution of conflict when it does occur.[111] Nevertheless, when this mechanism inevitably fails and conflict threatens the entire community, it provides for the legitimation of an act of projection and expulsion which discharges the tensions through the Single Victim Mechanism.

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[109] Parris, "Africa Needs God."
[110] Stephen Belcher, *African Myths of Origin* (London: Penguin Classics, 2005), 233 ff.
[111] Louw, "Ubuntu: An African Assessment of the Religious Other."

Walter Wink draws attention to the fact that what he terms "The Powers", the spiritual realities of all cultures, are good, are fallen and will be redeemed.[112] In a rush to correct the undoubted failures of the past and to affirm the validity of African culture there has been a tendency to forget or ignore the Christian insight that all human nature and all that humans produce is embroiled in what Christian doctrine terms "original sin", that is, it is "fallen". "[W]e cannot be saved from the powers by anything within the Power System, but only by something that transcends it".[113] The cultural product of *ubuntu*, as fine and as valuable as it is, is a human product, not something transcendent.

Ubuntu is a widespread notion in African culture, more than an interesting piece of social philosophy; it is foundational to the African religious world-view.[114] It has its limitations, and its praxis is erratic; nevertheless it is also open to redemption. It remains an important ideal with a clearly understood imperative within African culture. It is, for example, high praise to say of someone "he has *ubuntu.*"[115] It has an extremely widespread deployment in Southern African literature, turning up in the most unlikely of reflections.[116] If early African communities restricted their sense of belonging to one another to other members of the same kin group, the already noted

[112] Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 65.
[113] Ibid., 69.
[114] Corne Bekker, "Ubuntu Kenosis Mutuality: Finding the Other in Southern African Business Leadership," *2008_Ubuntu-Kenosis_Bekker*, April 2008, 19, http://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/rgbr/vol2iss1/2008%20April_Ubuntu-Kenosis_Bekker.pdf (Accessed 22 January, 2009).
[115] Tutu, *God Has a Dream*, 26.
[116] Bekker, "Ubuntu Kenosis Mutuality: Finding the Other in Southern African Business Leadership," 18.

fact, that the concept could be expanded to include a membership which extended beyond the kin group suggests that the concept of *ubuntu* can be further expanded in inclusive directions.

The African notion of *ubuntu* offers an African dimension to understanding "person", particularly in attempting to gain some insight into the idea of Divine persons in the revelation of God as "Trinity". Therefore the language of *ubuntu* is culturally appropriate for our focus on the Zambian context. It is also already imbued with relational dimensions which offer ways of addressing those concerns expressed by Barth and answering the calls of Torrance and Moltmann by offering a notion of "person" in which belonging in relationship with other persons is of the essence of the "personhood". A growing taste for the term amongst Western Church leaders[117] suggests that this genuinely African insight is already being taken up and integrated into already existing Western notions of person-in-community in an effort to rethink interpersonal relationships, even if some of these efforts are overly optimisitic. An adequate adoption of the notion, however, can only be made if the idea can be liberated from the limitations we have noted above, limitations essentially imposed upon it by the conflictual mimesis of desire.

7.3.3 Assessing Relational Persons

In the preceding material we have explored some concepts of "person" which are relational rather than individualistic. The concepts espoused by Girard and Alison, on the one hand, and Volf on the other, differ in a number of aspects, but their core ele-

[117] The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts-Schori, "Opening Address to the TEC General Convention 2009," July 7, 2009, http://www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/070709_PBopeningaddress.pdf (Accessed 29 July, 2009).

ments are that persons become individuated, unique unrepeatable persons in relationships with others. These relationships are, in human beings, conflicted relationships. Their broken and conflicted nature, however, is not inevitable, and the universe from which these relational persons arise is not "necessary" or closed. Volf draws upon the general trends of secular psychology, with its themes of conflict, repression and power relationships. Even the more secular versions of modern psychology do not see the "person" as merely a mask, an actor who is nothing more than a focal point for inevitable conflictual relationships. For most psychological understandings of the person it is possible to gain self-awareness and some element of growth and positive change.[118] Thus the "person" is not a product of impersonal and "necessary" or inevitable forces which have a pre-determined or "fated" outcome but is genuinely a "person" in the ontological sense with hope and some possibility of "redemption". While these secular models do not say all that Christians would wish to say about hope and redemption they are not inconsistent with Christian insights. Alan Falconer reflecting on the conflicted roots of all efforts to gain human rights and deal with human difference draws upon the work of Rollo May. Conflict and the power of individuation which conflict brings, he argues, can be shaped in positive and constructive ways. Christians are challenged by God in Jesus Christ to use their personal individuation and power positively in imitation of the *kenosis* of God in Christ, to enable other human beings to be human.[119] Falconer does not develop this much further, but does point us towards the questions of our understanding of Jesus Christ as the pres-

[118] Skynner and Cleese, *Families and How To Survive Them*, 36.

[119] Alan Falconer, "Theological Reflection on Human Rights," in *Understanding Human Rights: An Interdisciplinary and Interfaith Study*, ed. Alan Falconer (Dublin: Irish School of Ecumenics, 1980), 196-223.

ence of the Trinitarian God with which we have been wrestling. Miroslav Volf explores this further in the light of an understanding of the Trinity and we shall examine the adequacy of his insights in the coming chapters.

René Girard's understanding of "person" also takes up the themes of conflict, repression and power. At first sight there is a necessity about mimesis and conflict which suggests that "persons" are simply "masks" or actors whose role emerges from inevitable mimetic conflicts within society. There is more than this, however, to Girard's insight, and to explore this we must examine his understanding of Christianity, and explore how these insights have been taken up to formulate an insight into "person" in the Trinity.

The Southern African understanding of "person" is also "relational". Although of itself, unsurprisingly, it carries none of the insights into the conflicted nature of human identity found either in modern psychology or in Girard. It is not, however, inconsistent with these insights as espoused by either Alison or Volf. In our examination of this notion, however, we have seen that the individual person does not emerge clearly as a free, distinctive and unrepeatable individual. This reflects more general tendencies in Southern African cultures. Zambians, for example, name their children in highly stylised ways, sometimes because of their place in the family, or in response to significant events or communal celebrations at the time of the birth or to invoke the spirit (*mupashi*) of an ancestor who is thought to be present in the child. This, together with the observations made by Parris,[120] suggests a sense of "necessity" in the African world-view, of the cosmos being closed and of the person being an "actor"

[120] Parris, "Africa Needs God."

playing a communally allotted and therefore pre-determined role within society with little sense of the possibility of redemption. Ultimately death leads to the shadow world of the "living dead" which continues to interact with the world of the living and whose inhabitants may return either as a *mupashi* re-born in a living individual or as a non-physical entity who acts either as guardian or disturber of the community. The concept needs to be given that "ontological" dimension which προσωπον took on through the development of the doctrine of the Trinity. Desmond Tutu has taken up the idea of *ubuntu* and sought to integrate into his understanding of Christianity. His work will be examined in the coming chapters.

8 Person, Trinity and Zambia

In the previous chapter we explored the concept of “person” in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity. In classical Greek and Roman thought “person” was thought of as an epiphenomenon given temporary shape in the rationally predetermined essence of a “closed” Cosmos. In the course of the development of the doctrine of the Trinity “person” was given a new “ontological” dimension. This allowed “person” to be thought of as a genuinly free and unrepeatable individual with a genuine hope of redemption within an “open” cosmos. We noted that the doctrine of the Trinity quickly became isolated from Christian praxis, and that the Church, both East and West tended to fall back into a form of monarchianism. In the twentieth century Barth and Rahner sought to restore an emphasis upon the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and consequently the doctrine of the Trinity to the centre of the Church's witness. However, they had reason to be suspicious of the way in which the concept of “person” had developed in their context.

While Barth and Rahner give an adequate account of the Trinity within their own constraints, our understanding of the context of Zambia shows that a major challenge faced by that nation is one related to identity. We have seen that in Zambia a repetitive cycle of mounting conflict resolved by a cathartic expulsion. The outcome is that “persons” become actors filling roles determined by their ethnicity or social location. They are not “free”; instead they live in a society which appears to be locked into an inevitable closed pattern of destructive relationships which in turn hamper economic and social development. In this context our theology needs an understanding of “per-

son" which can speak the Good News of liberation from the seemingly inevitable closed cycle of conflict and expulsion. Neither Barth nor Rahner provide an understanding of the Trinity which can bear this particular weight.

In order to address this challenge we have sought a concept of person which can be used as an adequate expression of the Church's understanding and articulation of the doctrine of the Trinity. We have discussed a number of concepts of person in which relationship is a key component of personal being. None of these concepts are, as we have left them so far, capable of bearing the weight of the truly redemptive Word of the Gospel. In order that they may do so, they must be drawn into some account of Christianity, an account which provides a clear and adequate understanding of the Trinity in terms of persons in relationship. In this way we hope to construct an understanding of "person" based upon the "pacific" or constructive mimesis of one in whom there is no conflict, no urge to power, but only free creativity and the offering of life. We are not the first to attempt such a task and we must now engage with a number of theologies, most, but not all of which arise as a response to conflicted societies. We begin with the work of René Girard, whose insights do not arise from a specific conflict but from a reflection upon conflict in general. We have already discussed and made use of the more "anthropological" aspects of Girard's work, and this has provided us with a very effective understanding of Zambia's transition to political independence and its present circumstances. We must now turn to Girard's understanding of Christianity.

8.1 Girard and Christianity

Biblical literature, according to Girard, offers a unique insight into the working of the scapegoat mechanism. There are profound similarities between many biblical stories and the myths of other religions. The mimetic cycle is embedded in both, and both tell stories of figures who have been victims of the scapegoat mechanism. The myths tell their stories from the perspective of the community to which the mechanism has brought some temporary relief. The victim is understood as having, in some way, been at fault, and has become demonised as the source of the dis-ease within the community. Often the victim, once murdered, undergoes the second transformation to divinity, as his/her murder brings sudden and longed-for harmony to a community riven by conflict. Thus the myths share with biblical literature stories of mimetic contagion where the victim/hero is violently expelled only to become exalted. Girard reads both the Oedipus myth and the story of Joseph in this way. His comparative reading shows up one crucial difference: the perspective from which the stories are told. Myths conceal the truth about the events which surround the murder and emergence of the victim/god of their story. Myth, ritual and prohibition are all "cultural forms that double as both recollections and misrecognitions of victimage".[1] Girard uses the term "*méconnaissance*" for this phenomenon and argues that the confusion or distortion involved is necessary for myth, ritual, and taboo to be effective in the function of maintaining peace within society.[2]

1 Fleming, *René Girard*, 77.
2 Ibid., 55.

The Biblical story is written from the point of view of the victim. The hero/victim is clearly declared innocent of the charges laid against him/her showing up the real cause of his/her violent expulsion as mimetic rivalry. The Joseph story, the Psalms, the Book of Job are all expressions of the Single Victim Mechanism written from the point of view of the victim, against whom all are conspiring. "In all these texts those who are in the right are not the executioners, as in the myths, but the victims. The victims are innocent, and the executioners are guilty, guilty of persecuting innocent victims."[3]

The biblical texts often portray the Single Victim Mechanism under the figure of Satan. Satan presents himself as a model to imitate and seductively invites us to abandon ourselves to all our inclinations and desires. Desires which are not really ours, but the desires we have learnt from our model.[4] Satan then becomes transformed from seducer to forbidding adversary, the obstacle between us and our desire, the scandal which causes us to fall into mimetic conflict. This is the conversion from mimetic model to mimetic rival which plagues the whole of human existence. The final and most profound transformation of Satan is to become the means of refashioning order in the midst of the disorder which he has sown through the mimetic cycle. To achieve this Satan becomes the "Accuser". "At the height of the mimetic crisis Satan becomes the violent contagion that persuades the entire community, which has become unanimous, that this guilt is real."[5]

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3 Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 117.
4 Ibid., 32.
5 Ibid., 35.

Girard uses the name Satan in a "demythologised" sense. Satan is not a "god" of evil, he is, rather, a parasite on the creation of God, imitating God in a jealous and rivalistic sense. Thus Satan has no actual personal being. The false sense of personal reality associated with Satan is derived from the emergence of "A false transcendence"[6] like the profligate emergence of deities from the Single Victim Mechanism.

In refusing the allure of Satan, the biblical texts refuse to divinise the victims of the scapegoat mechanism. The Gospels, however, follow the Single Victim Mechanism through to the point of affirming the divinity of the victim. This immediately gives rise to the suspicion that Christianity is nothing other than a myth, essentially no different from other ancient myths of death and resurrection. The New Testament, however, tells the "foundational" story from a different perspective. Like the texts of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Gospels declare Jesus as the innocent victim of the scapegoat mechanism. There is no prior demonisation of Jesus by the disciples. Those caught up in the mimetic snowballing are revealed as duped, as "knowing not what they do", while it becomes clear that Jesus is the victim hated without cause. The divinity of Jesus is maintained, not by the unanimous mob after the event, but by the dissidents who separate themselves from the unanimity established by the collective violence.[7]

The Gospels are unique in their subtle deconstructive revelation of the Single Victim Mechanism. The Passion Narratives show the whole power of the mimetic contagion. The Jewish and Roman authorities, those crucified with Jesus, even the disciples themselves, are all caught up in the unanimous polarisation against Jesus. Yet the Gospels also represent a subtle disruption in the unanimity created by the Single

6 Ibid., 46.
7 Ibid., 121-124.

Victim Mechanism, a disruption small enough to ensure that the effect occurs, yet sufficient to ensure that revelation will come. “Thus the Gospels reveal the full and complete truth about the origin of myth, about the illusory power of mimetic snow-balling, about everything that the myths do not and cannot reveal because they are duped by it”.[8] This revelation is crowned by the Resurrection and divinisation of Jesus. The Resurrection sheds the only light possible on the full truth of the origin of human culture. It shows the true nature of the divine in Jesus. The risen ascended Jesus is not a god produced by the unanimity of sacred violence. The full truth revealed is the God who does not emerge from the myth-understanding regarding victims, but one who voluntarily assumes the role of victim “and makes possible for the first time the full disclosure of the Single Victim Mechanism”.[9] Thus we are obliged to distinguish for the first time between the false transcendence of the Single Victim Mechanism together with the demon-gods which emerge from it, and the true transcendence which destroys the mythical illusions and leads away from the mythic contagion which poisons human communities.

8.1.1 New Life

Girard notes that not all mimesis is necessarily either bad or conflictual. Mimesis is an inevitable part of being human. There can be mimesis, even a kind of rivalry, which is necessary to the order of a community, even constructive. There is a mimesis in which each rival and seek to out do one another in the effective performance of a task or duty[10]. He also conceives of desire which is “non-rivalistic” or “un-

[8] Ibid., 125.
[9] Ibid., 130.
[10] Ibid., 53.

obstacled", occasionally referred to as "pacific mimesis".[11] There is a naïve form of this in which the model and the disciple do eventually become obstacles or scandals to one another. There is a much more arduously acquired form of pacific mimesis which requires a conversion: a stepping outside the rivalistic mimesis, which entails learning a whole new way of being human. This is the form of mimesis which is taught in the New Testament as the mimesis of Jesus Christ.

All human models are, at best, no better than ourselves. We cannot imitate them without becoming entrapped in the projected illusions of power and prestige which beset all human existence. A mimesis of Jesus is rather different. Imitation of Jesus begins as the invitation to imitate the desire of Jesus. This is, to a certain extent, paradoxical, for Jesus does not have a proper desire of his own. His desire is to do the will of his Father, to become the perfect imitator of God the Father. It is to this that Jesus calls us. He does so because:

> Neither the Father nor the Son desires greedily, egotistically. God "makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, he sends his rain on the just and on the unjust". God gives without counting, without marking the least difference between us … If we imitate the detached generosity of God, then the trap of mimetic rivalries will never close over us.[12]

There is more to this than the simple "Imitation of Christ" which Thomas à Kempis encouraged, and much more than that encouraged by Pelagius.[13] The self-giving of Jesus as the perfect revelation of the Father gives true insight into creation, which is inextricably bound up with our understanding of redemption. Both are acts of gra-

[11] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 13.
[12] Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 14.
[13] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 12; Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 13.

cious self-giving without exclusion, violence or vengeance, both are before all that is, and all things are ultimately formed by relationship with pre-existent gratuitous love. This is more than simply shedding some light on a piece of information previously available, or revealing something previously not known. It reveals an insight into reality that was not previously available, involving a shift in human understanding.[14] As such it provokes a whole new reading of the Hebrew Scriptures in the light of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.[15]

It is only through the revelatory presence of God in Christ that we can gain knowledge of and insight into the "foundational murder" upon which human culture is built. Yet this knowledge is strictly from within the human processes of discovery. Revelation is therefore a process in which the reality of human nature is uncovered in ways which are entirely consistent human ways of discovering and knowing, a "subversion from within". Yet it remains inaccessible to us without an external revelation which also involves, and is impossible without, an act of absolution.[16] This is in effect a conversion, a change of heart or "self" as we are re-formed through the mimesis of Jesus.[17]

Girard's reading of the Scriptures is powerful and true to the texts. There is little doubt, for example, that he is correct to identify the revelation of the workings of the Single Victim Mechanism in the Book of Job, or in many of the Psalms. The social sources of much of the Hebrew Scriptures are to be found amongst those who have been marginalized, for whatever reason, by society and find themselves as ready vic-

[14] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 77.
[15] Ibid., 68, 77-78.
[16] Ibid., 68-69.
[17] Ibid., 62.

tims when the need arises. There are powerful expositions of persecution and scapegoating in the Psalms and Prophets, and these are most certainly carried forward into the New Testament, finding themselves a ready echo in the events which surround the death of Jesus. Jesus is the one who "went about doing good", yet he was demonised, persecuted and destroyed by the authorities.[18] It is clear too, that a central aspect of the Christian calling is the imitation of Jesus as the true image of God. Paul summons the Philippian community to "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus"[19] and the Corinthian community to the relational values of love, faith and hope in place of rivalry and conflict over ecstatic gifts and social status.[20] In the Gospels Jesus calls his followers to be like the Father in their overflowing generosity and to reject judgement and blame.[21] It seems incontrovertible that, whatever else repentance and new life might mean, we are indeed called to reshape our lives and model them, not on the rivalries and conflicts of the human world around us but on the self-giving of God in Jesus Christ. A gospel which failed to address the conflicted nature of human relationships as a central theme would indeed be no gospel at all.

There are, however, more voices than those of the persecuted in the Scriptures. As well as the marginalized, the potential and actual victims there are the voices of the powerful - the Court Psalmists singing the praises of the King and his bride, or celebrating the violent suppression of the enemy within or without, or just simply celebrating for sheer unnamed joy. There is the extreme bitterness and raw anger of a people enslaved and exiled calling for vengeance. There are, above all, portrayals of viol-

[18] Acts 10:38-39
[19] Philippians 2:5-11
[20] 1 Corinthians 13
[21] Matthew 7:1. The whole preceding passage calls the disciples to reject the objects of desire around them in favour of striving for the Kingdom of God.

ence, including violence committed at the command of God, God's punishment either upon Israel or upon the nations. It has therefore appeared to some that the Bible is little more than one more expression of recurring mythic themes. Girard has some sympathy with this thought, but argues that the very reworking of these myths represents a "subversion from within" through a retelling of their stories from the point of view of the victims.[22]

Girard offers a highly significant insight into the revelation which Christianity brings to us. As a recognition that the Scriptures offer a revelation of the shadowed roots of the human personality, it is particularly pertinent to highly conflicted societies. Girard's further claim that his "revelatory anthropology" offers a "subversion from within" allows the Gospel to be drawn into the imagery and rituals of a culture and at the same time draws cultural imagery and ritual into the proclamation of the Good News, subverting and reshaping culture as it is indwelt by and indwells the Gospel.[23]

However, Girard's account of Christianity is limited at a number of vital points. His account, for example, offers little in the way of insight into "the last things". Christianity works its revelatory power gradually; progressively liberating human society from the ills of conflictual mimesis. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ liberates human persons from a closed, fixed universe in which conflict is inevitable, but the new creation is evolutionary, emerging slowly within the process of history and without a transformative or transcendent "horizon" framed in either eschatological or

[22] Fleming, *René Girard*, 116-117.
[23] Andrew F. Walls, "The Translation Principle In Christian History."

apocalyptic terms. This in itself excludes the significant apocalyptic element of Christianity, an element which many other modern theologies have had difficulty in comprehending.[24]

Girard's concept of God is also limited. He places great emphasis on monotheism over polytheism as a central aspect of the revelatory power of the Gospel. The multiplicity of gods in polytheistic systems is a result of a multiplicity of ancient victims. The pantheon grows as new victims are divinised. While there is truth in this, the outcome is rather too static and closed an understanding of God, and although Girard does speak in Trinitarian terms, a coherent understanding of the Trinity is absent. This leaves a potential weakness in his account of the potential reformation of identity, whether as individual or as communal identity. It is only as the revelation of the one in whom God is incarnate and present in the world of conflicted identities that the account of the life and death of Jesus has redemptive power. A mimesis of Jesus is only a new life, new creation, if it is a mimesis of one whose identity is without any conflictual element. This ultimately leads back to an understanding of Jesus as the Son, and to a proper understanding of the place of the Son in the Godhead, to the Trinity and to the persons in relationship in the Trinity.

Girard is the first to admit that his understanding of Christianity is neither exclusive nor complete.[25] He has his followers amongst the theological community who have tried to extend his understanding of Christianity at various points. James Alison has

[24] Richard Bauckham, *Moltmann: Messianic Theology in the Making* (Basingstoke: Marshall Pickering, 1987), 3.
[25] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 25 citing "la route antique des hommes pervers".

sought to expound Girard's insight in terms of the traditional doctrine of "Original Sin". In doing so he has also outlined an understanding of the Trinity in Girardian terms.[26]

8.1.2 James Alison: Person as "Holon"

Alison adopts Oughourlian's language of "holon" to replace "person". For Oughourlian a person is never a person alone, rather he thinks in terms of "a *rappor interdividuel*...between two holons." It is this language that provides Alison with a concept of "Person" which acts as an analogy for the Persons in the Trinity.[27]

The analogy breaks down at the point of desire in the Trinity. No *holon* can claim its desire is original to itself without becoming locked into mimetic rivalry with an anterior other whose desire the *holon* is in fact imitating. In the Trinity there is no anterior other to the Father. All desire therefore originates with the Father, who is "unoriginated love". The Son is the exact image of the Father, except that the Son has an origin in the Father. Yet the Son is not exactly originated either, but shares in the unoriginated givenness of the Father. As the exact image and likeness of the Father he receives completely the fullness of the Father's nature, and as the perfect likeness in turn gives completely as the Father gives. In this relationship there is no rivalry, no illegitimate "appropriation" of originality, only gracious givenness and equally gracious reception, and the mimesis of the Father by the Son is so perfect that the two are one unoriginated nature "different inflections of love within that givenness".[28] The mimesis of love is not blocked or inhibited in any way in the relationship

[26] Ibid., 48-55.
[27] Ibid., 50-51.
[28] Ibid., 51.

between the Father and the Son. The Father gives his likeness to the Son, who in perfect mimesis of the Father both receives that givenness and freely offers his likeness to the Father "and the Father imitates the Son, and the Son the Father, and so on *ad infinitum* – which is traditionally called perichoresis".[29]

The mimetic "*rapport interdividuel*" which constitutes the Father and the Son as two *holons* is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is both the unoriginated love - giving of the Son by the Father - and the mimetic reciprocation of that love by the Son who is the given likeness of the Father. In the perfection of the mimesis there is no distinction between what the Father gives the Son and what the Son gives the Father. The Son and the Spirit share in the unoriginated giving of the Father, except that in the Son and the Spirit, it is not unoriginated giving, but being given, or being the giving of the given. In the case of God alone the relationship described as "*rapport interdividuel*" is itself a *holon*: "since it is the same unoriginated love as the holon Father and holon Son and is their perfect imitation".[30] The Spirit is thus a *holon* constituted by perfect unobstacled mimesis of gracious giving and receiving between the Father and the Son.

Between the *holons* there is perfection of mimesis without appropriation or rivalry. There is only the distinction of giving, acceptance of the giving and the enjoyment of being given.

[29] Ibid., 52.
[30] Ibid.

> "[I]n God difference does not mean separation, but mutual enjoyment of the same by the same, so that the holons constantly foster and cherish each other in ever more joyous imitation rather than appropriate the given over against each other".[31]

In order to avoid re-introducing mimetic rivalry into the Divine relationships, Alison prefers the term "distinction" to describe the differentiation within the Divine nature, rather than "difference", arguing that "difference" implies obstacled sharing leading to rivalry, while "distinction" makes possible unobstacled or pacific mimesis and sharing in unoriginated giving.[32]

Alison shares with Moltmann and Torrance, amongst many others, a concern for relational notions of "person" as appropriate for constructing adequate images of the Trinity. Alison's unique contribution lies in founding this upon Girard's understanding of the person as constituted mimetically, and in his exploration of how the persons/holons of the Trinity might be conceived of in ways which give rise to a genuine notion of persons constituted in a mimesis of love: a giving and receiving which is not "over against" others. These are important gains which allow us to think in terms of "person" or "*ubuntu*" in ways not constituted by rivalry and exclusion, but purely upon giving and receiving. They are gains which must be preserved if we are to develop an insight into the persons of the Trinity which can provide us with a model for constructive mimesis.

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[31] Ibid., 53.
[32] Ibid.

Alison claims that his language is more adequate and less confusing than the term of "person".[33] However, "holon" is even more "artificial" than Barth's language of "ways of being", and therefore gives rise to a number of difficulties. The term "holon" has little readily accessible meaning outside of a particular academic environment. It therefore further separates any doctrine of the Trinity from genuine contact with common Christian faith and praxis, leaving it evacuated of soteriological and missiological import for most Christians.

Further no language is entirely "value free". The term "holon" carries overtones from its origins in the thought of Arthur Koestler and its current use in Systems Theory into its theological deployment. For Koestler, *holons* are identifiable parts of a larger whole.[34] A *holon* is, however, not an entity as such, but "are posited and 'fixed' only out of the relational rules and strategies that help us make sense of reality".[35] They are therefore relational conceptualisations rather than being actual differentiated structural parts of a system.

In Alison's usage, a *holon* does not exist by itself but, following Oughourlian, he sees it as a "purely psychological entity, a structure in permanent becoming at the heart of continuous exchanges with other similar structures".[36] This therefore raises the question as to whether this language adequately guards against the collapse of the Trinity into an undifferentiated monad.

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33 Ibid., 52.
34 Mark Edwards, "A Brief History of Holons," n.d., http://www.integralworld.net/edwards13.html (Accessed 29 July, 2009).
35 Ibid.
36 Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 50.

In Alison's understanding the Father is unoriginated, the Son is like the Father in all things except in being unoriginated. Yet:

> He is not exactly originated either, because he shares completely in the pure gratuitous givenness ... of the Father ... He receives it completely, because he is the exact image and likeness of the Father, able therefore to receive the Father, and, as a perfect likeness, completely reciprocate the giving.[37]

Volf, commenting on Ratzinger's understanding of the Trinity, argues that Ratzinger's mistake is to conceive of both the self-giving of the Son and his acceptance of the Father's presence as being "complete". Once the self-giving is complete, there is no "self" to do the giving. And once the "complete" presence of the other has been accepted, it is impossible to see how the complete presence of the "other" is to be distinguished from the one doing the accepting. The same criticism can be applied *mutatis mutandis* to Alison. Once the giving and receiving of the other is exact, perfect and complete, it is impossible to conceive of a differentiated self which does the giving and receiving. This makes it equally impossible to conceive of a differentiation within the Trinity, where differentiation is necessary if there are to be any interpersonal relationships at all. This difficulty seems inherent in the language which Alison chooses to use:

> The key to this is imitation so perfect that the Other is the same. There is no difference between the holons, which would imply an over-against, an envious mimesis, but merely the distinctiveness of acceptance of the giving or the enjoyment of being given.[38]

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[37] Ibid., 51.
[38] Ibid., 52-53.

The difficulty is that once the Other is the same, where is the “otherness” of the Other, and therefore the distinction between the model and the imitator. Thus Alison's Trinity is essentially modalist. The Persons revert to being “masks”, or “actors”, impermanent epiphenomenal manifestations of the one Divine reality rather than descriptive of the Divine reality as essentially differentiated.

Without a clear sense of “person” with an ontological dimension, there are no interpersonal relations, no differentiation, only an isolated, impersonal, monadic entity, a necessary being, more “the machine” than “the ghost”. There is only a “necessary” closed cosmos without hope or genuine redemption, simply the repetitive patterns of destructive mimesis and conflict played out by human actors who, without genuine persons with whom they might enter into unobstructed mimesis, can never become genuine, free, unrepeatable, unique individuals.

8.2 From Girard To Wider Theology

So far we have investigated the viability of Girard's understanding of “person” as formed in mimesis for an adequate account of the Trinity. Girard's thesis sees the person created in a struggle which ends in self-assertion and expulsion. We have found that Alison, at least in his proper concern to avoid introducing a destructive mimesis of desire has been unable to clarify how the differentiation of persons is to be properly established, and thus how a genuine unique and free person is to be understood. Yet without an adequate sense of “person” in the Trinity we do not have the Trinity of real persons which is necessary for our context.

In response to this we need to engage with other theologies from conflicted environments in order to establish a more substantial understanding of "person". There are, however, important aspects of Girard's theory worth taking up as part of an understanding of the Trinity. The first of these is the understanding that a "person" is formed in mimesis of a prior other. This is not inconsistent with the biblical revelation of the Trinity. In the Fourth Gospel Jesus speaks of "doing the works of the Father" and of "doing the Father's will", of acting in imitation of the Father. The Spirit will take what is his and make it known.[39]

The second point which we may subsume into any understanding of the Trinity, is Girard's understanding of "pacific" or unobstructed mimesis. This is a mimesis in which the invitation to "be like me" is not barred by the forbidding "do not be like me". Persons in a relationship of unobstructed mimesis are not entrapped in a pattern of conflict. In order for genuine personal formation to take place, however, we shall have to clarify how the genuine distinctiveness of the persons is maintained without an expulsion.

The third point to take forward is that a person formed without the adversarial conflict and expulsion generated by the double-bind must become present to and in humanity in order to make a genuine and unobstructed invitation to human beings to "be like me". This would entail a revelation of the roots of human constitution in conflict which enables and liberates human beings into new relationships. It must also entail a revelation of God as God genuinely is, persons in unobstructed mimesis

[39] John 16:14

of one another and this revelation must also be an invitation to participate in the unobstructed mimetic relationships of the Trinity, which is also and always an act of grace.

One further point which we need to extrapolate from Girard's understanding of Christianity and incorporate into any theology of the Trinity is his recognition that the revelation of God must be a revelation of grace which is known by grace.[40] It is only by being drawn into participation in the life of the Trinity through Christ that human beings become truly substantial persons, no longer simply actors playing out the human conflicts which shape our cultures and ourselves, but genuine unrepeatable individuals in relationship with one another and with God: the "New Creation". This is not something which can be acquired, for once we human beings seek to acquire our own being we are once more entrapped in the patterns of conflictual mimesis. True personhood must come to us as a gift; only as that which is "given" without obstruction can it be true. Personhood acquired, is personhood acquired through conflictual mimesis from a conflicted model. This is personhood as a mask or actor, a repetitive re-enactment of the conflicts and exclusion which establish our culture. With this in mind we continue our search for an understanding of "person" by examining the work of Desmond Tutu.

8.2.1 Towards a New *Ubuntu*: The Theology of Desmond Tutu

We have noted that African cultures have a relational concept of "person" but that this concept has a number of weaknesses. One effort to express the notion of *ubuntu* in Christian terms has been made by Desmond Tutu, whose theology is characterised

[40] Barth, *Church Dogmatics II.1*, 27.

by Michael Battle as an "*ubuntu* theology".[41] Tutu's theology has been developed in the context of the struggle against Apartheid in his native South Africa. His experiences of that struggle and the positive and surprisingly peaceful final transformation of South Africa into a considerably more democratic society provides Tutu's theology with its characteristic tone of faith in the redemptive power and purpose of God which he claims is both realistic and imbued with the vision of hope.[42]

Tutu appropriates the African idea of *ubuntu* as a centrepiece of his theology, drawing strongly upon African traditional culture and its ideals of interdependence as a counterpoint to Apartheid's ideology of segregation and racial hierarchies. This is more, however, than ancient African cultural wisdom. It is something which is founded ultimately upon a biblical understanding derived from the narratives of creation and redemption. For Tutu the narrative of creation endows all humanity with the image of God. It is this which gives every human being infinite worth.[43]

The story of redemption is also a narrative of human worth and harmony in Christ who was lifted up to draw "all" humanity to himself.[44] Redemption also shapes the future of both humanity and individual human beings. One is transformed by the encounter with the "unknowable God" who makes the divine-self known in Christ so that one becomes a person in Christ. "This is the terrifying process of losing one's identity in order to emerge a redeemed person with respect to God and other selves".[45]

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41 Michael Battle, *Reconciliation: The Ubuntu Theology of Desmond Tutu* (Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 1997).
42 Tutu, *God Has a Dream*, vii-viii.
43 Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness*, 11.
44 Tutu, *God Has a Dream*, 20.
45 Battle, *Reconciliation*, 63.

Tutu is aware of the danger of subsuming individual identity into that of the community:[46] He counters this with an emphasis upon the value of individuals and upon the value of diversity. Human divisions founded upon ethnicity, religion or culture are not relevant to the love which God has for people, neither should they be relevant to the love people are called to have for one another. At the same time each individual is of value to God as created in the divine image. Human diversity, whether of cultures or of individuals, is of immense intrinsic value, with each human and each human culture needing the differing gifts and insights of the other for full *ubuntu;* full human existence.[47]

Tutu uses the image of the rainbow, a sign of prosperity and peace. God's people are the "rainbow people" to which each diverse culture and each diverse individual contributes their individual and diverse gifts.[48] This "rainbow" community is thought of in terms of a family in which relationships cannot be renounced despite any differences or disputes. The family is characterised not by monochromatic sameness but by respect for diversity and the ability to differ, or even disagree while still pursuing the relationship of love.[49] It is the interlinked community of diverse humanity to which each belongs and in which each makes a unique contribution, the "rainbow people" of all colours, which Tutu expresses as *ubuntu* and which makes the "we" of the true human community to which all belong by default.

[46] Ibid., 52, "Alternatives to Apartheid".
[47] Tutu, *God Has a Dream*, 25.
[48] Ibid., 47.
[49] Ibid., 22.

Tutu's understanding of the nature of God is harmonious with that strand of Christian theology which is characterised by a kenotic understanding of the nature of God as revealed in the Incarnation.[50] For Tutu God is transcendent, and the whole company of heaven "veil their sight" as they worship in the divine presence. Yet this transcendent God creates out of divine love. Tutu refers to the Rabbinic story quoted by Austin Farrer, which speaks of the God who "drew back the skirts of his glory to make a little space where he was not and there he created the world".[51] The idea of creation as an act of self-limitation on the part of God is a common theme in kenotic understandings of God.[52] The "self-limitation" of God extends to a divine need for human beings to act in partnership with God in the divine mission.[53]

Tutu balances the particular and universal elements of Christianity through a focus on the Incarnation. Jesus is a Jew, whose religious imagination, as well as that of his early disciples and interpreters, is shaped by the story of Israel's election. He is "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" which is a priestly act which is expressed in distinctly Jewish terms. Yet this priestly act, which takes away the sins of the world, is also an act of redemption which creates new *ubuntu* identity for all, in which no one culture is given pre-eminence over another. As the act of taking away the sins of the world it is also an act of judgement which reveals the sin in all

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50 Sarah Coakley, "Kenosis: Theological Meanings and Gender Connotations," in *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*, ed. John Polkinghorn (London: SPCK, 2001), 192-210.

51 Battle, *Reconciliation*, 59.

52 Jürgen Moltmann, "God's Kenosis in the Creation and Consummation of the World," in *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*, ed. John Polkinghorn (London: S.P.C.K., 2001), 145.

53 Tutu, *God Has a Dream*, 59-60.

human cultures. It creates a new identity for the individual, whose full, final and true nature can only be known in and by Christ, rather than by the parameters of ethnic classifications which are ultimately contingent human creations.[54]

Tutu's understanding of God is Trinitarian. God is "relational" or, as Battle describes it, "familial":

> What God is, is what God does. God's [care] is from all eternity in which there is a ceaseless movement of love, an outpouring, a giving, sacrifice at the heart of the divine life. God gives to God the Son all of [God's] being and empties [the divine self] in the [love] of the Son who is coequal, coeternal with God, light of light, very God of very God ... all eternity returns the love and the life and the being that the Son receives and gives back to the Father in equal measure, emptying himself totally without remainder, always giving, always receiving, always giving without end and this movement of life, of love of being, is God the Holy Spirit, who binds the Father and Son and we have the eternal, ineffable triangle of love.[55]

Tutu's fusion of *ubuntu* with kenotic imagery is an important step forward in making the idea of *ubuntu* a serviceable concept for Christian mission in Africa. For Zambia, in particular, the fusion offers a vital ingredient in a Christian critique of political behaviour. Tutu's re-articulation of the concept of *ubuntu* in terms of a new transcendent identity in Christ created by Christ are particular gains.

Tutu's theology is strongly shaped by his lived experience, as all praxis theologies are, indeed as all theology which seeks to pass beyond "mere theology" must be. His writings are interspersed by moving and powerful anecdotes of the experience of black South Africans under the appalling and demeaning oppression of Apartheid,

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[54] Battle, *Reconciliation*, 71-73.
[55] Ibid., 75.

and illustrate how a racist world view can be deeply internalised.[56] A good deal of his life has been dedicated to countering Apartheid, both at the level of theology/ideology and at the level of the pastoral needs of a community which has been subject to oppression and constant humiliation. He has thus developed a theology which grounds an affirmation of human dignity and the consequent opposition to oppression and exclusion in the Christian narrative of creation and redemption, with a strong focus on developing black African consciousness and self-worth in the face of the ethnic and cultural supremacist ideology of Apartheid. To a large extent his theology could be defined as a "Black Theology" in the vein of James Cone. The task of "Black Theology" has been defined as "transforming the black condition from oppression to authentic humanity ... to free the black mind from those beliefs and attitudes which frustrate the impulse and movement toward liberation."[57] That Tutu pursues, and to a very large extent achieves, this without resorting to the denigration of the culture and values of White South Africans, Europeans or North Americans is both remarkable and indicates the depth and range of his Christian values. This, however, poses a difficulty for the commentator seeking to adapt Tutu's theology for differing contexts.

While much of what Tutu has to say is of universal relevance and needs to be adopted in Lusaka, (or for that matter in Washington or London) as much as in Johannesburg or Cape Town, his theology cannot be directly lifted out of its formative context without doing it the disservice of making it "mere theology" a theoretical construction which loses its prophetic edge and power. Zambia's circumstances differ consid-

[56] See for example Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness*, 15-19.
[57] William Jones, "Assessing Black Theology," n.d., http://www.nathanielturner.com/assessing-blacktheology.htm (Accessed 17 May, 2010).

erably from those of South Africa. The contestants for power in today's Zambia are more "equal" in power, and no form of cultural or ethnic segregation or hierarchy is enshrined in its constitution. In this more equal environment all groups are all the more open to the entrapment to which Volf points: that those who are, or claim to be, oppressed are not necessarily innocent of their own mimesis of desire and rivalry and are all too readily drawn into the mimetic cycle.

However, while showing the inevitable limitations of any good contextual theology, Tutu's insights still provide an important source for our development of a theology for Zambia. He is, for example, deeply suspicious of the tendency of all human societies to found themselves on the values of competition, rivalry and domination.[58] He is equally well aware of the dangers of becoming entrapped in a cycle of destructive mimesis and "doubling" and his understanding of *ubuntu* involves an adoption of the values of forgiveness, reconciliation and service rather than a mimesis of the violence and oppression, the desperate scramble for "kudos" which drives conflictual mimesis.

> Social Harmony is, for us, the *summum bonum* – the greatest good. Anything that subverts or dehumanises this sought-after good is to be avoided like the plague. Anger, resentment, lust for revenge, even success through aggressive competitiveness, are corrosive of this good. To forgive is not just to be altruistic. It is the best form of self-interest. What dehumanises you, inexorably dehumanises me. Forgiveness gives people resilience, enabling them to survive and emerge still human despite all efforts to dehumanise them.[59]

[58] Tutu, *God Has a Dream*, 39.
[59] Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness*, 35.

Ultimately Tutu's understanding of *ubuntu* is therefore one of self-emptying, a commitment to service carried out in a mimesis of God in Jesus Christ.[60]

Tutu's more recent writings contain little in the way of a specific and theological articulation of the key Christian doctrines of Incarnation and the Trinity, although they are strongly implicit in his approach. This is, perhaps, inevitable. Tutu does not claim to be constructing anything like a systematic theology, he aims to meet the real and pressing needs of the moment felt by the congregations in the townships and rural communities of South Africa rather than to meet the very different requirements of the academy in its ivory towers. Even in *God Has a Dream* in which he has seeks to give "cumulative expression" to his life's work, his thought remains more contextual than "systematic".[61] This, however, leaves us with some work to do in order to trace the roots of Tutu's admittedly very satisfying concept of *ubuntu* and to ground it in a model of the Trinity. We do so by turning to one more theology developed as a response to a conflicted society. If we can find an insight into the Trinity as an *ubuntu* community in which unity and diversity are intrinsic values and from which rivalry and conflict are absent, then we have a path to an available model for a pacific mimesis for Zambia, or for that matter, elsewhere.

[60] Tutu, *God Has a Dream*, 79, 121.
[61] Ibid., ix.

8.3 Towards an adequate understanding of the Trinity

8.3.1 Volf and Moltmann

Miroslav Volf is a Croatian Protestant theologian whose book *Exclusion and Embrace* was written in response to a question Jürgen Moltmann put to him, "Can you embrace a *Četnik*?" For Volf the *Četnik* was "the evil other" who had shortly before devastated his native Croatia. Volf wrote conscious of the profound tensions at the heart of Christian belief and praxis: "the tension between the message of cross and the world of violence", between the desire to follow the crucified and the disinclination to either to see others crucified or be crucified oneself. The book is a product of his own personal and committed struggle to make sense of these tensions.[62] The core of the book is the development of an understanding of human relations in which the balance between otherness and relationship is maintained. His concern is to maintain "inclusion", through which the other is embraced, while at the same time maintaining appropriate boundaries and hence differentiation. Reading Nietzsche, he notes that exclusion can and does arise from a "knowledge of the good". The "good and just" are those who instigate and participate in the crucifixion. He takes up Foucault in a similar vein: the moral and civilized self, like the good and just self, rests all too often on the exclusion of what it construes as immoral and barbarous.[63]

As much as "inclusion" is necessary, the escape into "total inclusion" can be destructive. Some element of exclusion is necessary, for example, for a praxis of discernment and judgement, especially concerning those matters which pertain to good

[62] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 9-10.
[63] Ibid., 61-62.

and evil. “Intelligent struggle against exclusion demands categories and normative criteria that enable us to distinguish between repressive identities and practices that should be subverted and unrepressive ones that should be affirmed”.[64] For Volf to take a stance which does not name exclusionary practice as “evil” in a final and ultimate way is to descend into non-order, chaos and death.

The main thrust of Volf's resolution of the dilemma of exclusion and inclusion is a sustained argument in favour of “differentiation”. Differentiation, he argues, is both “separation-and-binding”. Separation alone ends in exclusion; binding alone ends in the formless chaos of non-creation. A true binding requires differentiation, a belonging together of those who are different yet united. To a large extent he echoes the concerns of David Lochhead, who argues that distinction is actually necessary for true and constructive interaction. In choosing between partnership and dialogue as models of relationship, Lochhead argues that partnership does not maintain sufficient distinction. A better model is based upon the relationship between the divine and the human in Christ. Lochhead's model is essentially incarnational. Traditional Chalcedonian Christology rejects any model based either on expulsion or isolation in favour of a model in which the divine and human natures remain different yet open to the other.[65] In Jesus, God and humanity are free to address and to be addressed, to respond in openness and love.[66]

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64 Ibid., 63.

65 David Lochhead, *The Dialogical Imperative: A Christian Reflection on Interfaith Encounter* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 1988), 96.

66 Ibid.

Volf argues that a properly differentiated human identity requires connection, and that proper connection requires differentiation. Identity, therefore arises out of both the binding of identification and the separation of exclusion.[67] Sin is therefore two-edged, in Volf's view. On the one hand it is that which by violence separates those differentiated beings that God has joined together, an act of expulsion in which inter-dependence is denied. On the other hand it can also be that which artificially joins or absorbs that which God has differentiated, marking out the different as inferior, to be denied the right to separate existence by being absorbed or subjugated. Both of these Volf sees as "exclusion", for both ultimately exclude "otherness" or difference from the self or the community.[68]

To achieve the balance of "differentiation" in the Godhead, Volf adopts Moltmann's synthesis of substantial and relational notions of "person" into an imagery of the persons of the Trinity as "individual, unique, non-interchangeable subjects of the one common divine substance, with consciousness and will".[69] Thus each of the three persons are independent in as far as they are divine, but also inextricably interdependent with one another. Rather than being subsistent relations, the divine persons "*subsist* in the common divine nature; they *exist* in their relations to one another".[70] There can be no relationships without distinct differentiated persons between whom the relationships exist; neither can there be persons except in relationship to one another.[71]

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67 Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 66.
68 Ibid., 66-67.
69 Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 171.
70 Ibid., 173 (Italics original).
71 Ibid., 172-173.

Volf sees the Cross as the central revelation of the Trinity. There are, he argues, two dimensions to the Passion: self-giving love and the creation of an interior space in which Christ receives humanity. The self-giving and the reception of the other are two essential aspects of the internal life of the Trinity. No person in the Trinity can be defined except in terms of a relationship of self-giving and other-receiving. Volf draws upon the notion of "perichoresis", which he designates as "mutual interiority". This mutual interiority depends in turn upon a clear sense of differentiation in order to prevent the concept from collapsing into a form of modalism. The Father is "in" the Son, the Son is "in" the Father, but the two are not identical.[72] The Trinity as revealed in the Son is "open", turning towards the world; the Son and the Spirit envisioned as two open arms, with which God embraces the world. This embrace results in the cross where, the rhythm of the dance of mutual self-giving is broken, "in the agony of the passion the movement stops for a brief moment and a fissure appears so that sinful humanity can join in".[73] In as far as the Persons receive and "make space" in themselves for the other this model is essentially kenotic, for they must each "empty themselves" in order that the other may have space to be.[74]

Volf's model presents effective gains. It is only possible to conceive of genuine unique individuated persons if we understand that this means persons who belong in relationship together but who also have appropriate boundaries through which distinction is maintained. This also seems implicit in Tutu's understanding of *ubuntu*. In describing clearly both elements of what he defines as "exclusion", on the one hand an act of expulsion and on the other an act of assimilation, the model of persons in

[72] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 128.
[73] Ibid., 129.
[74] Ibid., 189.

relationship is more clearly differentiated than in Alison's model. The outcome is a model of the Trinity which opens the possibility of a much more diverse and complementary set of personal and ethnic relationships than is possible with Alison.

The difficulty is that Volf does not make clear exactly how the personal differentiation is to take place, although he appears to be in broad agreement with Alison that individuation results from a conflictual process which involves identification and rejection.[75] To leave the Trinitiarian persons as constituted by a process of identification and exclusion leaves the persons of the Trinity constituted exactly as human persons. Volf argues that:

> In the Trinity ... distinct persons are internally constituted by the indwelling of the other persons in them. The personal identity of each is unthinkable without the presence of others in each; such presence is part and parcel of the identity of each.[76]

There are a number of possible readings of Volf's argument to take into consideration here. One possible way to read this is as implying that there are distinct persons, whose personal existence is well established logically prior to the relationships, for only a well-established self is sufficiently secure and stable to admit and be so open as to bear the internalised presence of the other without entirely collapsing or losing identity. This would seem to suggest a coalescence of three pre-existing entities into one relational community: a form of tri-theism. Another possibility is to read this as implying that the relationship is logically prior to the persons. The persons formed in this relationship are shaped by an exclusion which is insufficient to establish a self,

[75] Ibid., 70.
[76] Ibid., 187.

leaving behind a partially-formed self, distinguished but not quite distinguished from the others. This, however, would inevitably collapse back into a formless monad. Clearly Volf intends neither; however he does not clearly establish a balanced position in which both are impossible.

Moltmann goes some way towards addressing this problem by arguing that neither the persons nor the relationship are logically prior to the other, the two are inextricably connected and "arise simultaneously and together". The Divine unity is constituted by "perichoretic circulation".[77] Moltmann's understanding of a "hypostatic" conception of a person involves an element of "substance". The Latin term *persona* must be changed from its root meaning:

> It must no longer describe the interchangeable mask as role; on the contrary it must describe the non-interchangeable untransferable individual existence in any particular case."[78]

In Moltmann's understanding, while the unique and non-interchangeable persons have the Divine nature in common, "their particular and individual natures are determined by their relationship with one another."[79] This represents some progress, but it still leaves open the question as to how these particular individual persons might be conceived as being differentiated from one another without some element of exclusion.

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[77] Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 173.
[78] Ibid., 171.
[79] Ibid., 172.

With this in mind we now wish to propose a cross-fertilization of the models of the Trinity in an effort to retain what we hold as valuable in Girard's insights while guarding against both a collapse into modalism and any form of individuation which becomes entrapped in the double bind leading to a fragmentation in the Godhead.

8.3.2 An Alternative Proposal

We begin with the hierarchical view of the Godhead attributed to Origen and held by the Cappodocian Fathers, which understands the Father as the origin of the Godhead.[80] To understand the Father as the origin of the Trinity affirms the "ontological freedom" of God, offering an inherently personal and redemptive insight into the nature of God. If God's existence is rooted in some impersonal substance, then God is a "necessary being" whose nature is determined from the outset. This in turn binds all creation into a pre-determined and necessary existence. If the Divine Nature is, on the other hand, determined by the free Person of the Father, then there is hope for creation, because neither the nature of God nor creation is determined out of necessity, but in freedom. Thus God is free to share the Divine life with creation and creation is free to participate in the life of the Trinity.[81]

The idea of the Father as origin of the Godhead also leads us logically to a concept of eternal generation. "Father" is a relational term: that is, it cannot be thought of except in terms of "Father of someone". This requires a "generation" or a "begetting", to deploy more traditional language, not an "extrusion" or "expulsion" of the Son. It is a free giving, in which the Father is logically prior to, but is never without the Son,

[80] Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 265.
[81] Zizioulas, "Trinity Today," 25.

nor are the Son and the Spirit "less than" or subordinate to the Father. The hierarchy we are trying to elucidate is closer to what Paul Laurent and Giles Paquet refer to as a hierarchy of complimentarity than what is commonly thought of as a hierarchical structure.[82]

While we may conceive of the Father as "logically" prior and as "origin", we are nevertheless thinking in terms of an eternal generation whereby the Father is from all eternity "Father" in relationship with the Son and the Spirit. Equally, we may see the Father as logically the origin of the Trinity, but only in as far as the Father determines the constitution, personal nature and oneness of the Divine being. In the perichoretic life each of the persons are, as Moltmann argues, equal, and in equality engage in the mimetic dance of love with one another. Each reflects, constitutes and freely gives being to and freely receives being from the other. The Father possesses divine "substance" of himself, the Son and the Spirit have it from the Father in their own individual ways. The Father is the "'origin without origin' of the Godhead" and the divine hypostases of the Son and the Spirit are derived from the Father. The Father therefore forms the "monarchical unity" of the Godhead. Moltmann avoids "subordinationism" by distinguishing this "monarchical unity" from the inner life, or "perichoretic unity", of the Trinity: "The three Persons themselves form their unity, by virtue of their relation to one another and in the eternal perchoresis of their love"[83] In the perichoretic unity of the Trinity all three Persons are equal, the monarchy of the Father being only valid for the constitution of the Godhead.[84]

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82 Laurent and Paquet, "Intercultural Relations," 179.
83 Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, 177.
84 Ibid., 176.

The Father is himself a "Person", but without a model or rival, for there is nothing and no-one prior to the Father. For Alison, this is necessary in order to recognize that the Father is logically prior to the Son and the Spirit so that there can be a mimesis of gracious receiving and giving of love. All desire has its origin in the Father as "unoriginated love".[85] The constitution of the person of the Father cannot therefore involve any exclusion, either as expulsion or assimilation, for there is no prior model with which to identify, enter into rivalry, or expel. Since the Father determines the nature and constitution of the Trinity the persons of the Trinity are all determined by one who is without rivalry and exclusion as either expulsion or assimilation. In order for the other two persons to be genuinely "true God from true God, one in being with the Father", the Father must gift his being to the other two Persons: a being without mimesis and rivalry.

This gift must include "personal" being and differentiation, as well as a participation in the unoriginated nature of the Father. As a partial analogy, it is possible to consider the mimetic dance or "eye game" to which we alluded in an earlier chapter. The parent and child play a mimetic "game" in which the child is given a sense of "differentiation" from the parent. Neither the Father nor the Son are human children or parents, yet differentiation of the Son from the Father is a gift, analogous to the gift of differentiation and self awareness given by the parent, given by the Father in a careful and loving relational "dance". It involves a mimesis between Father and Son and the Spirit which is eternally without rivalry or exclusion. The Son and the Spirit look to and imitate the Father, the Father looks to and imitates the Son and the Spirit, but there are always elements of differentiation introduced by the Father so that the

[85] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 51.

Son remains the Son, the Spirit remains the Spirit and the Father remains the Father and none is absorbed into the other. Always and eternally the Father is the one who originates, giving the free gift of difference in the dance, always and eternally the Son receives the gift by which he becomes a true Person not a "holon" but a true "*umuntu*": both a differentiated individual from the Father and relational to the Father. It is equally true that the Father is always and eternally a true "*umuntu*". At the same time the Father is always the Father, never without the Son and the Spirit, always in relationship with them.

For the persons to be truly persons they must have boundaries, albeit porous boundaries in which the other may "step through", in order to properly mutually indwell the other. This is implied in the gift of personal being. These boundaries cannot be established by an expulsion, they must therefore be established by a "withdrawal" or "making space" for the other to be differentiated. Volf and Moltmann suggest a withdrawal or making space so as to include the "other" within the established self. What we propose is an extension of this. The Father, and by mimesis the Son and the Spirit, must also withdraw to an extent in order for other persons to have "space to be" "outside" of the other, that is to be a differentiated person. This element may well be implicit in Volf and Moltmann, however in their proper concern to establish perichoresis and to avoid a fragmentation into tri-theism it does not seem to be made entirely explicit. The logic of their argument, however, would suggest that perichoresis depends upon a clear individuation.

It may well be possible to argue from the point of view of Girard that what we suggest catches the Trinitarian relationships in the double-bind of "imitate" and "do not imitate me". For it would seem that in withdrawing from the other each must forbid the other some element of themselves. However, this is not necessarily the case. Rather, the withdrawal is part of the gift of participation in the free personal being of the other. It is an essential part of the gift. It is both an act of empowerment and, as all acts of true empowerment must be, an act of "kenosis" in order that the differentiation of the persons is not overwhelmed. As such, it is an essential part of the "imitate me", in that mimesis must be a mimesis of a free person who has freely determined to give personal being. In turn, the Son and the Spirit freely accept the gift of the personal nature, including the gratuitous gift of their differentiation. In their kenosis they are not locked into a rivalry through appropriation of personal being as their own, or through an over-identification which ends in exclusion. Once it is understood that personal differentiation is given and accepted as a gift, then it becomes possible to conceive, however imperfectly, of a personal nature that is constituted without expulsion, constituted gratuitously in a manner which includes the gift of differentiation, of "personal space", to deploy a popular phrase.

The Son and the Spirit are given "space" for personal being both within the Father and as differentiated persons in the way that the Father withdraws himself in order to give them individuation. The Son and the Spirit both in their own unique ways receive this as a gift. In turn the Son and the Spirit act in mimesis of one another and of the Father, thus allowing the Father to exist "within" them and also creating space for the Father to exist as differentiated with truly personal being. The mimesis is a

mimesis without any form of conflict or rivalry, for there is no conflict or rivalry to imitate: the Father does not cling to being, nor does He become the forbidding adversary to the Son and Spirit. Therefore it is the mimesis of perfect love in which all give each the freedom to be, each welcomes and receives the others as "mutually indwelling" so that there is neither over-identification, nor expulsion, the three are different, but one. The unity of the Trinity consists, as Moltmann argues, in perichoretic circulation. In this perichoresis three genuine persons, constituted by giving and receiving the gift of individuation, mutually indwell each other and in mimesis mutually reveal or "represent" each other so that each is present both substantially and mimetically in the other.

The individuation of the persons in the Trinity involves a costly withdrawal, a "kenosis" in which the "space" in which the other may be different is created. There is also a sense in which the receiving of individuation is costly, for each person must relinquish something in order to receive the gift of differentiation: a kenosis in which the persons empty themselves in order to receive the gift of true personhood. The hymn Paul quotes in his letter to the Philippians offers something of a paradigmatic pattern. Christ Jesus "empties himself" and through the self-emptying and humiliation of his most abased death is given the "name above every name".[86] The Cross and Resurrection do not just reveal something about human victimisation, nor do these events only reveal something about God. They reveal and issue from the very depth of the kenotic nature of the Divine Trinity. The Father gives the Son the greatest and most terrible gift of individuation, relinquishing the Son to freedom and differentiation, even to the point of forsakenness, in order that the Son may become

[86] Philippians 2:5-11

the truly risen Person. The Son, relinquishing himself in his relationship with the Father to the point of being forsaken, receives this gift in pain and humility, the gift of true risen and Divine personhood, the name above every name.[87] In this view the Incarnation, the Cross and the Resurrection arise from within the fundamental nature of God, rather than being a divine "emergency response" to creation's plight.[88]

To a degree this gift of freedom and differentiation is also apparent in creation. Arthur Peacock argues that creation as understood in modern science is consistent with a view of God as creator.[89] He argues that the creative activity of God can be seen in the processes by which the cosmos has come into existence as described by the sciences. This involves, however, a recognition that God allows creation a certain element of "autopoiesis": "God gives existence in divinely-created time to a process that itself brings forth the new".[90] This gives creation an element of genuine freedom, and genuine distinction from God. It is the creative action of God which is identified in the process of creation, not the Divine self. The freedom granted, the "risk" taken, the joy and the suffering entered into in this act of creation, truly allows creation to be creation. The alternatives would be an over-identification which amounts to a form of pantheism, some vision of creation as a non-entity, as a puppet manipulated according to Divine Providence or an over-separation which would expel God entirely from the process of creation, essentially Deism or Gnosticism. The platform Peacock builds for his reflection on the costly suffering of God in creation and re-

87 The core of this idea was developed in a private conversation with Prof. Drew Gibson.
88 David Runcorn, *Choice, Desire and the Will of God: What More Do You Want?* (London: SPCK, 2003), 1-3.
89 Arthur Peacock, "The Cost of New Life," in *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*, ed. John Polkinghorn (London: SPCK, 2001), 21-42.
90 Ibid., 23.

demption is one which fits well with Volf"s concept of creative separation and binding. Creation is separated from God, yet in its difference from the Divine is bound to God in the relationship of creation and creator.

A third important element comes into view here. Humanity is formed through mimetic rivalry and it seems from Girard's account that conflict and victimization are inevitable and unchangeable parts of human existence. Walter Wink rightly identifies ancient myths as portraying a certain inevitability to an hierarchical society founded upon violence.[91] The myths project this onto the cosmos in the form of a violent suppression of the forces of chaos. Alison argues that the revelation of Genesis, partial as it may be, read again in the fuller light of the Resurrection shows a creation which is *ex nihilo* and without violence.[92] In these revelations we are confronted with the God who is prior to us, with persons-in-relationship who are not formed in mimetic rivalry but in the mimesis of love in kenosis. This God calls and entices us through the Incarnation into this same mimesis, into "the terrifying process of losing one's identity in order to emerge a redeemed person with respect to God and other selves".[93] There is therefore nothing inevitable about conflict and exclusion; they are neither inherent in creation nor are they an inevitable part of the transcendent destiny of creation.

The fourth element of this understanding of the persons of the Trinity is that God is constituted in grace. The giving and receiving of personal being is gratuitous. It arises in origin from the will and choice of the Father who gratuitously, and without

[91] Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 15.
[92] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 97.
[93] Battle, *Reconciliation*, 63.

any compulsion, gives personal being to the Son and Spirit. Each person therefore comes into being through a mimesis of grace which is inherently unobstructed and pacific.

The "coming down" from heaven to earth of the person who is formed in kenosis, is the goal of the whole history of salvation: God came into the world so as to make human beings, created in the image of God, live with one another and with God in the kind of communion in which Divine persons live.[94] This has Christological implications. In Jesus we are confronted with the person of the Son made incarnate. The meaning of the hypostatic union of the two natures must involve yet another element of separation and binding whereby God gives the gift of the divine self in the person of the Son and yet at the same time "makes space" for true humanity to exist with integrity in a relationship in which neither is absorbed into the other yet in which both are united in one person.

In Jesus we are confronted with a Person who is formed entirely without the exclusion which so shapes human life. Alison is properly concerned to avoid anything which suggests that the human nature of Jesus is so confounded with the divine nature that the example of Jesus becomes obstacled. So it is necessary to maintain that at the same time this confronts us with a genuine human being who has a human desire, a human will formed in relationship with that which is logically prior to him but formed in a non-rivalistic mimesis "which is in principle a possibility for us" once it is revealed to us.[95] This entails that we are formed as the "new creation" in mimesis of the presence of the Father in the Son, and all that this implies in terms of

[94] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 181.
[95] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 55.

the divine mimesis of love. If this were not so, then there would be the double-bind of "be like me/do not be like me" for we would be called into a non-rivalistic mimesis, a life "in Christ", which would be in principle impossible for us, and thus would have no real concrete redemptive implication. This returns us to the thought that the Incarnation involves a "subversion from within" of what it is to be human.

8.4 Some Conclusions

In this chapter we have explored a number of concepts which may offer a way forward for Zambia. The usual prescriptions of democracy and development, while profoundly important to stability in any nation, do not alone offer a sustainable way forward. Zambia's tensions are rooted in conflictual mimesis. While any improvement in living standards for Zambia is, in general terms, a good in itself, neither abundance nor scarcity directly dispel or cause conflictual mimesis. This became clear in the earlier chapters of this work where we saw that while there has never been any genuine scarcity of land, nevertheless conflictual mimesis has occurred in Zambia with land as a focus. One only needs to reflect that in other countries in the region there are potentially abundant valued resources - diamonds, oil and gas in Angola, diamonds, gold and other desired minerals in the Democratic Republic of Congo – yet, despite their abundance, these resources, and the vast wealth they have generated, have fuelled rather than prevented conflict. Democracy, too, has its own problems, and while it must be part of any resolution in conflicted societies it cannot stand alone. Other societies, like Northern Ireland, have operated a passing semblance, at

the very least, of democracy, but have, nevertheless, been highly conflicted societies. At the heart of Zambia's tensions lie human relationships; relationships between situated persons.

In order to seek an insight into these relationships, into how they might be reshaped more adequately in the image of God, we have explored the concept of "person" as person-in-relationship, and focused on an African insight into the concept of "person". We concluded that the idea of "person" needs to be drawn into an insight into person-in-relationship which is outside of human conflict. In doing so we have come to propose an understanding of the Trinity as persons-in-relationship who exist as both differentiated and mutually indwelling persons in a mimetic dance in which identity is given and received as a gift. At the very heart of this dance lies a kenosis, a self-emptying which issues in creation and redemption, in the Cross and Resurrection which lie at the very heart of the Divine Trinity. In the following chapter we wish to draw out a little of the meaning of this for the Church in Zambia today.

9 *Ubuntu* in The Mission of the Church

Over the course of this work we have carried out an exploration into the conflicted aspects of Zambian life and developed a theological response to that particular context. In order to be a properly contextual theology, and to match Schreiter's criteria our theology must be capable of giving rise to a new and reshaped praxis for the Zambian Church as it engages in mission in and to Zambia. Our concern is not just for the life of the Church in itself but rather that the witness and worship of the Church becomes what David Lochhead calls a missiology "for the world".[1] The most appropriate response which the Church in Zambia can make is to offer a mimesis of Christ which is itself a call to a mimesis, to be "imitators of me as I am of Christ" without obstacle.[2] Thus our purpose in this chapter is to offer some brief indications of how the Church in Zambia might offer this mimesis of Christ together with some of the issues and questions connected with this missiological task. We begin with a brief examination of the life of the Church in Zambia today.

9.1 Church Praxis in Zambia.

In comparison to European Christianity the Zambian Church is a very new community; the main missionary advance, given impetus by Livingstone's death in 1873, began around 1880.[3] As a European foundation the Church remained, for many

1 Lochhead, *The Dialogical Imperative*, 96.
2 1 Corinthians 11:1
3 Taylor, *Christians of the Copperbelt; The Growth of the Church in Northern Rhodesia.*, 2.

years, European in character and has only slowly developing an indigenous leadership.[4] Even today the main churches remain strongly influenced by Western culture and Western Christianity.[5]

The Church, therefore, has not yet permeated local culture to the same extent that Christianity has permeated European culture. This leaves Zambia open to shallow and "a-cultural" versions of Christianity. The most pervasive form of Christianity in popular urban culture is that of the North American tele-evangelist. The only ground based alternative to the government TV station, Z.N.B.C., is Trinity Broadcasting Network (hereafter T.B.N.), the influence of this form of Christianity is almost universal in the urban areas. One often finds upon entering Zambian homes where there are TV sets that they are tuned in to T.B.N., often for several hours in the day. The vacuous nature of the material broadcast by T.B.N., with its emphasis on "miracles", "prosperity gospel", raw showmanship and constant appeals for donations, does nothing to address any of the real needs of Zambian society and makes no appropriate effort to engage with local culture. Instead it portrays the lifestyles of its wealthy and largely North American supporters, hosts and performers. Those Zambians, like Nevers Mumba, who have adopted the teaching and habits of their North American models have themselves become pale mimetic representations of their North Americ-

4 Ibid., 21.

5 One Roman Catholic Bishop is an Irish SMA missionary, with many European missionary priests Two of five Anglican Bishops have degrees from English universities, while two more have degrees from the essentially Western environment of South Africa. The Anglican Seminary relied heavily on European staff until 2008. The UCZ trains all its clergy through a programme designed in and validated from South Africa, while the Brethren remain overly reliant upon expatriate missionaries.

an counterparts, living the "blessed" life of wealth and access to power. Such Christianity offers only "opium for the people", encouraging rather than subverting predation and mimetic conflict.

The outcome of the slow pace of inculturation and the anaesthetic effect of tele-evangelism means that many Zambians seem to live in religiously parallel worlds, which neither touch nor mutually indwell one another. People acknowledge and practice some form of Christianity while at the same time they are shaped by African Traditional Religions, as evidenced by the popularity, not to say wealth, of many "traditional" healers and herbalists,[6] and the real fear which anything resembling witchcraft generates. Others, usually belonging to one of the many Pentecostalist traditions, have turned away from their culture altogether, rejecting completely most aspects of their culture as "Satanic".[7] While this happens at the level of conscious decision one suspects that African culture still retains a powerful grip at a less obvious, and more potent, level.

9.2 Towards A praxis of Contextualisation

The Church has the opportunity to engage with Zambian cultural life. The history of mission in Zambia has left the Church in a position to build an effective and genuinely contextual out-reach. There are Christian communities, old mission stations and medical centres in even the remotest rural regions. During the Protectorate the Church played an important role in the provision of education. It remains an import-

[6] Some traditional healers for example, can afford expensive regular advertisements in the national press and have their "clinics" in relatively high rent locations in Lusaka.

[7] A good deal of Zambian ambivalence about Christianity and African tradition was apparent at a conference entitled Christianity and Culture held at the Pentecostal Transafrica Theological College in Kitwe in 2007 at which the writer presented a short paper.

ant agent in the provision of basic health care, and in social and economic development. Throughout the history of both Northern Rhodesia and Zambia the Church has played an honourable and constructive role in promoting social and political change. The declaration that Zambia is a "Christian Nation", whatever its ambivalences, gives the Church an influential role within current society. Tele-evangelist Nevers Mumba spent a short, if profoundly unsuccessful, time as Vice-President.[8] Presidents are invited to, and attend, significant church services[9] and it is not unknown for government to seek to co-opt the support of the Church for government programs.[10] The Church is therefore in the position to make a positive contribution to the common life of Zambia, to influence public policy debates and to offer insights which will give people the resources to become genuinely free and unique persons - if it can make an effective effort at contextualisation.

A praxis of contextualisation involves the subversion of a culture from within. Its model is the Incarnation through which the Gospel becomes embodied in a community and its culture, but must also re-shape that community around the pacific mimesis of Christ.[11] Like the scribe trained for the Kingdom, the practitioner of contextualisation brings out treasures old, in the form of cultural meaning systems, and treasures new, in the shape of the revelation of the Good News.[12] Both must be present and both must indwell and appropriately shape one another.

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8 "BBC NEWS | Africa | Zambian leader sacks his deputy," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3715032.stm (Accessed 4 September, 2009); "BBC NEWS | Africa | From TV evangelist to Zambia's vice president," n.d., http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2956122.stm (Accessed 4 September, 2009).

9 President Mwanawasa, for example, attended the consecration of the Anglican Bishops of Northern Zambia and Luapula at Copperbelt University in Kitwe.

10 This writer took exception to the Deputy Minister for the Copperbelt claim that the Church was giving uncritical support to Government programmes.

11 Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 454.

12 Matthew 13:5

Miroslav Volf argues that Christians, like Abraham, must make a "departure" from their culture of origin. This involves the complex relationship of "critical distance" from one's own culture which in turn requires a proper judgement upon evil as it occurs in every culture. This arises not through fleeing from culture and the cutting of all ties, neither does it come some form of multiple cultural personality. Instead it emerges from the act of giving allegiance to God *within* the context of one's culture.[13] Thus the Church is not some isolated sect. In response to the Gospel Christians "have stepped, as it were, with one foot outside their own culture while with the other remaining firmly planted in it. They are distant, and yet they belong. *Their difference is internal to the culture*".[14]

An integration of both distance and belonging is therefore necessary; one requires the other if there is be neither a collapse into an amorphous whole nor a fragmentation into the isolation of fissiparous and rivalrous sects. This is true to the meaning of *ubuntu* and of those African proverbs to which we alluded in a previous chapter. Human beings are only human beings within cultural order. The Christian is called to be "salt" and "light"; that is to be a "subversive" person, participating in the mission of God to redeem cultures. However, a Christian can only be a subversive person from *within* human culture.

What is proposed is a dialogical and incarnational approach in which Zambians "depart" from their own culture without leaving, become "different" without being "outside" or "beyond". They "indwell" their culture as Christians. This is the Christian calling to participation in the redemptive mission of God in Christ. This is not

[13] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 39-40.
[14] Ibid., 49 (italics original).

done in individualistic isolation any more than any other aspect of human existence. It is done only in the new *ubuntu* of the Church within which people are called to live redeemed and redemptive relationships; live the mimesis of Christ. In what follows we propose to examine two significant areas in which the Church has an opportunity to practice the mission of subversion.

The first of these involves an engagement with the rituals of modern African culture. Rituals mark crucial points in human life, birth, coming of age, marriage, death. These rituals give our humanity its particular cultural form, making us members of a particular people whose story is told in the rituals. The difficulty, we have already seen, is that the rituals are all mis-recognitions, concealing the full truth of the expulsions and murders at very foundation of our cultures. The Church has its own rituals, which have a revelatory and redemptive purpose. We will focus particularly on the ritual of the Eucharist.

9.2.1 The Eucharist as "Subversive Memory"

Human institutions remain ambivalent, and no-one familiar with the politics of any Anglican Province would ever consider that the Church is exempt from falling back into the mimesis of rivalry and conflict. The Church, however, retains the memory of the sacrifice of Christ, the Eucharist, at the very heart of its life. The modern ecumenical concern with the concept of "anamnesis"[15] indicates that the Eucharist bears a close resemblance to the ritual that accompanies myth in any human culture. Myths are recounted in ceremonies through which the myth is "lived". The sacred events are

[15] "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (Faith and Order Paper no. 111, the "Lima Text")," n.d., http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/faith-and-order-commission/i-unity-the-church-and-its-mission/baptism-eucharist-and-ministry-faith-and-order-paper-no-111-the-lima-text.html (Accessed 11 September, 2009).

re-enacted in a way surpassing bare commemoration. Time itself is transcended, and one becomes contemporary with the sacred events, present before the Supernatural actors. One enters the mythic time, witnessing the divine works, re-learning their creative lessons.[16]

Commenting on the resurrection scene set in the garden in John's Gospel, Alison notes that the garden setting evokes the creation. "Here is something quite clear: we have a foundational scene of origin in reverse, in which the victim is uncovered and given back in order to permit a new sort of foundation that does not depend on a cover-up".[17] The Eucharist is the ritual through which time is transcended and the Christian community enters this "foundational scene in reverse" in order to become "re-tied" to one another and to God.

This structural similarity means that ritual of the Eucharist, like the texts of the Scriptures, is a subversion of myth and ritual. The Eucharist does not enact a delusion in which the founding events are distorted and unrecognized but rather reveals the reality of the self-giving of Jesus and thus the painful truth of the foundation of human culture and identity. In the Eucharist we do not enter into the story of Jesus ourselves, as if it was something which we could appropriate, rather we receive as gift incorporation into the life of the Divine Trinity.[18] As Christ is received in the Eucharist each communicant becomes, in Volf's phrase, "an ecclesial person":[19] one who is drawn back into the events of the Cross, into the mimesis of God in Christ, one who receives identity and differentiation as a gift and also to whom all the other

[16] Eliade, *Myth and Reality*, 19.
[17] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 77.
[18] Torrence, "The Doctrine of the Trinity," 6.
[19] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 129.

members of the community are internal. Thus the "Catholic Personality" is a reflection of the Trinity, as each person of the Trinity is differentiated yet mutually interior to the other so it is for each ecclesial or catholic person.[20] This is not a dissolution of one into a formless all, but on a differentiation in which one is "in" the other as all are "in" Christ, yet each is maintained in their own identity. It is this that keeps alive the pacific mimesis of Christ in the Church, maintaining both the members of the community and the whole community in its identity given in Christ in the midst of its own human reality.

The *ubuntu* community of the Church's proclamation of the gift of God is therefore an inclusive community of Christ. Here the African forms of address to others - "my father", "my mother", "my brother", "my sister" - have genuine meaning as from all and to all. The true extended family is all *abantu*. At the same time the community affirms the identity of the person as one who has been given the gift of genuine differentiation, a genuine individual *umuntu,* gifted for and in his or her differentiation from other *abantu.* Without this individuality there can be no relationship, no community, no *ubuntu.* All this is collectively celebrated and received in the ritual through which the community "remembers" its foundation, the ritual to subvert all ritual: the Eucharist.

As we receive our identity in Christ, so we are received in Christ. God in Christ gives the divine self to us and makes space in the Divine life for us,[21] and we are called and enabled to give ourselves and to receive Christ within us. In turn, we too must enter into relationships of mutual receiving and self-giving with those created

[20] Ibid., 51.
[21] Ibid., 126, 129.

others with whom we share the world. This applies to all relationships which may be categorised as relationships with any other. In order to live in peace with one another we as individuals, as communities. ethnic groups or nation states must recognise ourselves as receiving identity, and as being affirmed in the particularity of our selves, while learning to "make space" for the identity of others.

9.2.1.1 Subverting Ritual

An important part of the missionary engagement of the Church will involve a subversion of older cultural rituals which define and transmit the identity of communities. These older rituals must be brought into a redemptive engagement with the rituals through which the *anamnesis* of the self-giving of Jesus is enacted. Through the transformation of the rituals whereby a culture identifies itself, and expresses its foundation in the misrecognition of the Single Victim Mechanism, the culture itself can be gently but effectively subverted from within.

Zambia has had its share of creative practitioners in this respect. Mabel Shaw, a London Missionary Society (hereafter L.M.S.) missionary teacher in the early 20th century at Mbereshi carried, out an unusual and challenging experiment in inculturation.

> Mabel Shaw created a school for girls based on traditions from African village life and an English boarding school. Regarding the school as a 'tribe in miniature', living a life centred round an invisible Chief .... Worship at the school developed an idiosyncratic style as, under Shaw's direction, the tradition of a Free Church chapel combined with ritual taken from everyday life in the Central African bush.[22]

[22] Julia Allen, "Mabel Shaw's Theology in the Context of Her Work as a Christian Missionary Teacher in Northern Rhodesia 1915--1940," *Feminist Theology* 16, no. 2 (January 1, 2008): 199.

This effort at inculturation, allowing Christian and African traditional rituals to impact upon one another, had considerable effect. The school was considered highly successful, and Shaw herself received an OBE for her work.[23] The local governing body of the Church emerging from the mission commissioned a group to write a report on evangelism and spiritual nurture. The report shows the deep influence of Shaw's ideas and language, language never before seen in L.M.S. documents.[24] She became a trusted confidante to many young Zambian women and most importantly her work influenced many ordinary and extraordinary Zambian women, like Kenneth Kaunda's wife Betty.[25] Her efforts at inculturation and the written reflections based upon them leads Julia Allen to the assessment that:

> Her radical thought on issues surrounding Christian spirituality had implications for the Christian movement as it became an agent of change in Central Africa.[26]

If the Church in Zambia today is to continue to be an agent for change, contributing effectively to building a true *ubuntu* community out of what is currently a highly conflicted society then it must be receptive to African culture and find ways in which the practice exemplified in the work of Mabel Shaw can be revived and renewed in Modern Zambia. The myths and rituals through which the distinctiveness of human cultures is maintained only by a concealed exclusion must be reshaped so that distinctiveness comes to be maintained by grace and revelation accepted through faith.

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[23] Ibid., 196.
[24] Ibid., 208.
[25] Ibid., 208-209.
[26] Ibid., 194.

9.2.2 Towards *Ubuntu* Leadership in Zambia

The second focus we wish to take for our suggestions for a missionary praxis is leadership. Throughout the history of the Church, leadership and the Eucharist have been inextricably entangled. The Church's leadership quickly became the point at which the historical and revelatory nature of the Gospel was preserved in the face of the clear danger that it would be transmuted into one more myth, one more mis-re-cognition, by gnosticism.[27] Thus the ritual of the Eucharist was preserved as a "subversive memory" rather than a deluded memory. The Church's understanding and praxis of leadership can therefore never be separated from the revelatory events which the ritual remembers. Leadership in the Church must thus always reflect the grace and enable the pacific mimesis through which human beings become true individuals.

9.2.2.1 Hierarchy and Complementarity

We have seen that in Zambia leadership has taken the form of predation and conflictual mimesis. The identities of the contestants are appropriated through conflict and are fluid mimetic representations of the identity of those who were "logically prior", the previous ruling party or President. Each new incumbent has become an interchangeable actor filling a role in the mythic cycle. This has maintained conflictual instability and exclusionary praxis at the heart and focus of a national identity which is itself precarious and exclusionary. Society is ill at ease with itself, groups and individuals take on identities which are also fluid and interchangeable roles, shaped by

[27] Irenaeus III.3,4 in James Stevenson, *A New Eusebius* 117..

the seemingly inevitable mythic cycle. Zambia therefore needs a praxis of leadership which builds structures and habits within society which generate the dynamics of separation and binding through which people receive genuine ontological identities.

Noting that many people prefer to live in environments in which they are surrounded by others of similar ethnicity Laurent and Paquet explore the idea of social "encapsulation": mechanisms which create both physical and social separation between groups. These range from the enforced segregation of Apartheid to more voluntary arrangements such as the Swiss cantons, each with their own separate cultural, linguistic and ethnic identity. Alongside encapsulation they suggest mechanisms of redistribution whereby it is ensured that power, wealth and other social and economic goods are redistributed amongst separate ethnic communities. In conjunction, these two mechanisms create "social distance and hierarchy". Hierarchy does not involve a domination of one by the other but rather is conceived in terms of complementarity.[28] This entails a recognition of the permissible and essential otherness of the other.

The idea of a hierarchy of complementarity represents a positive gain which is clearly harmonious with the concept of Trinity which we have proposed as the root model for human relationships. Their idea of encapsulation, is however, redolent of notions of a separation in which there is no real "binding", but at best a form of "amicable divorce", which when combined with the notion of "redistribution" suggests a carefully equitable division of the marital property. It might well be as much as one could expect, at least as a temporary measure, in highly conflicted societies. The suggestion seems to promote a mutual agreement to live in the absence, or at best only in

[28] Laurent and Paquet, "Intercultural Relations," 179.

the remote presence of the other, like Jacob and Esau,[29] but it lacks a sense of mutual empowerment and interiority. The accompanying redistribution of social goods may well mitigate tensions consequent upon this partial reconciliation, but cannot do away with them altogether. It is hard to see how one could prevent the situation arising whereby each will accuse the others of distorting or taking undue advantage of any redistribution or of receiving more than a fair share, which is what appears to have happened during the Kaunda régime. The danger that the whole arrangement will collapse into a mimetic crisis is even more acute in a situation where any redistribution has to address a prior imbalance.[30]

In arguing the case that the British legal system should offer some element of "space to be" to both Islamic and Orthodox Jewish systems of jurisprudence, Archbishop Rowan Williams envisions a differentiation in which there is a plurality of identifiable communities.[31] He maintains that states can, and do, recognize and "give space" to alternative identities, even those which dissent from the official identity. He argues that the function of the law in society is to secure the freedom of groups which dissent from the "official" religious and cultural identity the freedom to act according to the precepts of their own specific culture or religion.[32] This could mean the right to refrain from the practices of wider society on the grounds of religious or other cultural scruples, or to carry out certain actions not necessarily approved by

[29] Gen 33:1-15

[30] Something of this is apparent in the accusations common amongst European settlers in Australia that "Aboriginal people get more than their fair share of social resources", amongst White South Africans who resent the "Black Empowerment" programmes, North American Whites who object to "positive discrimination", or the language of the British National Party which complains that" ethnic British" people are disadvantaged by race relations laws.

[31] "The Archbishop of Canterbury - Archbishop's Lecture - Civil and Religious Law in England: a Religious Perspective," February 7, 2008, http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1575 (Accessed 19 June, 2009).

[32] Ibid.

wider society on the grounds of religious or cultural obligations. In order for this to be possible Williams advocates a type of "hierarchical" structure in which a plurality of overlapping jurisdictions is recognized within an over-arching structure which protects the rights of members of dissenting groups to access all the rights and benefits granted to all citizens.

> [T]he situation should not arise where membership of one group restricted the freedom to live also as a member of an overlapping group, that (in this case) citizenship in a secular society should not necessitate the abandoning of religious discipline, any more than religious discipline should deprive one of access to liberties secured by the law of the land, to the common benefits of secular citizenship – or, better, to recognise that citizenship itself is a complex phenomenon not bound up with any one level of communal belonging but involving them all.[33]

What Williams proposes is a mutual indwelling and belonging which neither expels nor assimilates individuality on the basis of differentiation. Identity is given and made secure within a structure. The hierarchical arrangement is a logical hierarchy within which all forms of belonging are equal as well as different. There are elements of the sort of Trinitarian thought which we have been proposing in his argument. This is a pattern towards leadership in Zambia should move the nation. This in turn involves the leadership in a changing their patterns of behaviour to take up what Laurent and Paquet term "*renouncement*".

[33] Ibid.

9.2.2.2 The Praxis of Leadership

Laurent and Paquet draw the idea of *renouncement* from Girard's work. They argue that it is not a mechanism which has been used in the circumstances of inter-cultural tension, being "most utopian". Nevertheless Girard's *renouncement* is proposed as a feature of a "civil theology" in combination with what they term "encapsulation" and redistribution of social goods.[34]

It is highly debatable that "*renouncement*" is quite as "utopian" as they suggest. Robert Bates argues that the "predatory behaviour" of African leader creates instability. Stable political order occurs when the élites refrain from predation and instead use their power to create the security within which the wider population may generate wealth. The pay-offs are less immediate than the wholesale looting of state resources, but the gains over the longer term are greater.[35] As much as there is an element of self-interest in act of restraint on the part of a political élite it nevertheless also involves an element of exchanging rivalry and exclusion for mutuality and interiority. This is, in essence, a form of renunciation, however imperfect it may be in practice.

In similar vein, Ghani and Lockhart argue that "The true legitimacy of the sovereign government, which arises from the empowering of the populace, is not a matter of an "ought": it is a matter of an "is"".[36] States work in as far as they "create space" and offer the gift of security and identity to the citizen. The state and the powerful within the state "withdraw" their power and act gratuitously to empower the citizen.

[34] Laurent and Paquet, "Intercultural Relations," 177.
[35] Bates, *When Things Fell Apart*, 15-29.
[36] Ghani and Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States*, 22.

States in which the leadership does not practice some form of renunciation or self-limitation are liable to collapse into a formless chaos in which identity disintegrates as internal security collapses, and communities fragment into gangs of the violent and careless whose very fragile and temporary identity is founded only upon exclusion.

Corne Bekker argues that there is an "emerging paradigm of leadership [which] has helped South Africans begin to think of leadership as something that is done in community rather than through a privileged individual."[37] Bekker, making a synthesis between *ubuntu* and kenosis, argues that:

> ...ubuntu and kenosis find common ground in the value of mutuality, where the wall of separation between leader and follower is removed as they locate and redefine one another in their common humanity and so set in motion a renewed ethical movement that facilitates the (re)building of a just and caring society.[38]

Bekker's understanding of *ubuntu* is too uncritical, nevertheless adding an appropriate critical dimension to *ubuntu* of the sort which we have proposed would deepen rather than seriously undermine the concept. His proposal is for precisely that form of leadership which would tend to build the hierarchy of complementarity for which we have argued above.

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[37] Bekker, "Ubuntu Kenosis Mutuality: Finding the Other in Southern African Business Leadership," 18.

[38] Ibid., 20.

9.2.2.3 Modelling an Alternative: Church Leadership

Zambia has followed a strongly centralised and hierarchical pattern of political leadership. All power flows through the office of the President and all political decisions ultimately lie with him. This is a pattern which is repeated throughout Zambian society. Observing Anglican diocesan offices one gets the distinct impression that little gets decided or acted upon until the bishop is present. This pattern of centralisation and hierarchy is not necessarily one a particular bishop has wished upon himself. It is part of the mimetic pattern of any Zambian organisation, and one finds it in government offices and small businesses as much as in Diocesan Offices. Within the Church it is a pattern found in the UCZ, even in the Pentecostal Churches, which claim not to have the same hierarchical forms of leadership. The Church needs to examine its patterns of leadership. Instead of become mimetic representations of political leadership in wider society the Church must offer an alternative *ubuntu* model of leadership as part of its lived missiological engagement with wider society. Church models will need to be based on the ideas of kenosis and service which we have already described.

9.2.3 Some Conclusions

We have examined the way in which our "redeemed" notion of *ubuntu,* can make some impact on the life of Zambia through a praxis of contextualisation which involves a "departure" from one's culture of origin "without leaving", an indwelling of culture as a Christian, whose very participation in culture is shaped by distinction.

The new *umuntu* in Christ is a person whose life is shaped by membership of the Christian *ubuntu* community, whose foundational scene is recalled in the ritual of the Eucharist. This ritual is the "subversive" memory of the Cross and Resurrection as the revelation of the true nature of human identity founded upon mimetic conflict and exclusion enable human beings to receive their identity as "given" in Jesus Christ and to live in pacific mimesis of him. We have offered some thoughts on the praxis of leadership and the praxis of engaging with and shaping traditional African rituals in Christian terms and allowing African rituals to impact upon Christian ritual.

This provides us with the directions with which to answer the last part of the question with which we began: the question of how the life of Zambia might be reshaped in the light of what we have understood of its history, and of the influence of mimetic conflict over the identity of Zambia. We suggest that the life of Zambia may be effectively reshaped by an incarnational approach whereby the Zambian Church, as denominations and as one community, seeks to "subvert from within" the life of the nation. It can most effectively do so by making real and present in its own life and praxis and in its proclamation and call to both the community at large and to leaders and élites the new *ubuntu* revealed in Jesus Christ. The *ubuntu* modelled upon the relationships between the Divine Persons in the Trinity and made present to humanity in the incarnation, Cross and Resurrection.

The proposals are modest and exist only in outline. This is partly because they are an offering of a *musungu,* an "outsider" who has sought to indwell Zambian life and sought the indwelling of Zambia and her cultures for a time. They are therefore

offered as suggestions and encouragements, not as prescriptions. In the end the Zambian Church must find her own way to incarnate the Gospel and to proclaim Jesus Christ before the eyes of her peoples.

10 Testing The Thesis

In the introduction to this work we put forward a thesis for testing, having asked if it is possible to construct an adequate and effective theological response to an adequate and effective understanding of the conflicted aspects of Zambian society drawing upon the "revelatory anthropology"[1] of René Girard. We have accepted from the outset of this work that in sociology, and thus also in contextual theology, much turns on the presuppositions and interests of the interpreter. Any interpretation of something as complex as a human society will leave aspects which do not quite fit in to the interpretive scheme which must be left for another examination. Our focus has been on issues of conflict and identity and there are other aspects of Zambian life to which we have not attended. This work is therefore an abstraction. Abstraction and an ineluctable remainder are inevitable in any understanding of the world,[2] and we have proceeded on this understanding. The question which we must now answer is not whether our work is an abstraction but rather whether or not this abstraction enables us to gain a new and more adequate insight about the whole. It is therefore our purpose to explore what we have achieved, and in particular to test our interpretative framework founded upon the work of René Girard.

This is far from the only work which has taken up Girard's as a basis for additional exploration. Chris Fleming has noted a number of the thinkers in a strikingly wide range of fields who have incorporated Girard's ideas into their own research.[3] This

1 Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 25.
2 Fleming, *René Girard*, 163.
3 Ibid., 153-157.

broad range of further exploration suggests that Girard's abstraction leads to a fruitful understanding of the larger and more complex whole in a variety of fields. Simple and spare as Girard's basic insight is, it seems to unfold to reveal an interwoven complexity in which the cycle of mimesis and conflict appears to create complex fractal patterns throughout every aspect of human interactions. It is this breadth in the application of Girard's work which has provoked the accusation that Girard has created an overly systematized "theory of everything". This in turn requires us to make an assessment of Girard's work as providing an adequate interpretation of the facts of the particular Zambian context.

10.1 Girard and Culture

According to Girard, human culture emerged from the murder of the victim.[4] This founding murder on its own is not enough to create a culture. Social stability and order also require the repetition of the founding murder through ritual. All our cultural institutions emerge from rituals which pervade early human culture at every level. Ritual is therefore the foundation of all culture, moderating the conflicts which are an inevitable part of mimetic desire.[5]

Girard argues that the New Testament identifies the nations of the world as the "principalities and powers". These have both an earthly nature and a transcendence which, although illusionary, is effective in cloaking their true nature with the appearance of ultimate cosmic reality. The powers have a deep ambivalence. While they are tributaries of Satan, they themselves are not "Satan". Although their spiritual dimen-

4 Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 87.
5 Ibid., 90-91.

sion is a false transcendence they represent a stability and order, which is necessary in a world alienated from the Kingdom of God, their rituals keeping the mimetic contagion at bay.[6]

Walter Wink, although accepting much of Girard's thesis, rejects the idea that the mimetic cycle underlies human culture. He draws upon some anthropological evidence on remote contemporary communities as well as archaeological evidence to suggest that societies can and do exist without endemic violence, maintaining that human beings are not "genetically hard wired" for violence, and that human societies can live without violence.[7] Widespread violence, the Powers, and Satan, he argues, are late arrivals.[8] The evidence which Wink brings forward is difficult to assess, and Wink himself accepts that it is open to alternative interpretations.[9] Quite apart from the uncertain nature of the evidence, Wink's case misses the key point in Girard's thesis which is that mimesis occurs precisely because human beings are not "hard-wired", whether for violence or anything else. Even those most basic drives are malleable and mimetic.[10] Most human conflict is therefore not based on some instinct for violence, but in mimesis.[11]

Wink argues that early human societies were a good deal less violent and acquisitive than those which succeeded them. He argues that it was not until the early Bronze age that militaristic societies emerged which had the basic features he detects in the "domination system". As militaristic societies spread through conquest other societ-

6 Ibid., 95-98.
7 Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 96.
8 Ibid., 39.
9 Ibid., 38.
10 Fleming, *René Girard*, 11.
11 Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 11.

ies were forced to become their mimetic doubles in order to resist them. “The irony is that successful defense against a power-maximizing aggressor requires a society to become more like the society that threatens it”.[12] What Wink does not say is how or why previously peaceful societies existing should suddenly become such militaristic threats to their neighbours. His claim that human societies “stumbled into a chaos that had never before existed” seems unlikely.[13] It seems a good deal more likely that human societies were simply progressing along a logically inevitable path laid down for them by the chaotic non-being of mimetic violence - a path which began with conflict in smaller societies where the less aggressive began to resemble the more aggressive through mimesis. Those original militaristic societies of the early Bronze age simply arrived first at the point where a full-blown parasitic military élite emerged.

We may therefore conclude that, in the absence of a more adequate explanation of the, admittedly slender, evidence, Girard's thesis is correct. At the root of all human culture lies a founding murder and its ritualistic repetition. The whole mimetic cycle Girard, argues, is the work of “Satan”. Satan is both the principle of disorder and also the principle of order. It is Satan who robs humanity of its true individuality entrapping us in the mimetic contagion.[14] Ultimately this is because Satan is himself without true stable being. “To clothe himself in the semblance of being, he has to act as a parasite on God's creatures” existing only in the mimetic contagion.[15] Human beings are drawn by the invitation to “be like me” into this parasitic nature, and en-

[12] Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 40.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 34-36, 87.
[15] Ibid., 42.

trapped in the same non-being. Thus a human person is not truly a person so long as they remain caught up in mimetic rivalry. Human autonomy is nothing more than an illusion created as we seek to appropriate our being in conflict and exclusion. The more we strive to assert that delusional autonomy the more we become enslaved to our human mimetic models, themselves slaves to the mimetic contagion, and thus the more entangled in mimetic rivalry with them, the more subject to the power of Satan. [16] Our search for a theology for Zambia has been a search for a theology by which people can be freed from this entrapment by and in "non-being" and come to ourselves, to our true being in God.

10.2 Assessing the Thesis

Two interrelated but distinct questions must now be answered in order to assess our thesis. The first is have we achieved an adequate interpretation of the facts as they are and an insight into the possible path which Zambia might take over the next few years? The second question is have we provided a theological and missiological reflection which is both faithful to the witness of the world-wide and historical Christian community and which can also shape the further praxis of the church in Zambia?

10.2.1 Sociological Questions

To answer the first of these questions we need to explore how far we can now answer the four questions asked in Sociology which we discussed in our introduction: what is happening, why is it happening, what is life like, and is it good or bad for human beings?

[16] Ibid., 16-15.

In assessing our ability to respond to the first two questions we need to briefly sum up what we have uncovered. If we are to understand what is happening and why it is happening we need to understand the context in which the events are set. We began with an account of Zambia's formative history and found that prior to the arrival of the Europeans there were a number of disparate ethnic groups in the territory which became Zambia. Some of these groups seem to have been in a process of identifying with one another in an effort to resist invasion from further south. At the same time, there were ethnic groups who may well have had little contact with, or knowledge of, one another prior to the emergence of the Protectorate's industrial economy. The question as to why Zambia emerged from the British Protectorate of Northern Rhodesia therefore seems to force itself onto our agenda. Girard's thesis provides a particular insight into the process of mimesis and conflict which offers an elegant and satisfying understanding of Zambia's emergence through the "liberation struggle". Zambia's very existence is the mimetic double of the Protectorate of Northern Rhodesia. Its identity is founded upon the expulsion of the British colonial power as the "Scapegoat". The model/rival being displaced, African Nationalism took its place and became what it displaced, mimetically appropriating the identity of the Protectorate. Zambia therefore could not, without becoming self-destructive, even consider the possibility of anything other than retaining the identity it had appropriated and those political boundaries which were an intrinsic part of it.

Our use of Girard's work allows us to pose this question, which seems not to have been previously posed at all, and answer it in a way which is consistent with the available historical knowledge. The answer, once we come to it, seems simple and

commonplace. Even those without a Girardian framework seem to concur that conflict was the cornerstone to the formation of a "common" African nationalist, and therefore Zambian, identity.[17] It is the Girardian framework which allows us to see with precision what exactly happened in the transition to independence, and recognise that Zambia emerges as a result of a founding expulsion.

Our method has therefore allowed us to reach an insight into the historical background against which the events and patterns of Zambian life are set. It is this understanding of Zambia's history which allows us to understand the events of Zambia's post-independence life, particularly the cyclical pattern of crisis and catharsis. When we come to this insight it seems once more to be commonplace and obvious. The fact of a cyclical pattern whereby movements based upon inter-ethnic alliances emerge, take power and fragment, has been discerned by others. Our method has enabled us to offer a greater insight into, and explanation of, this pattern. Each new movement for political liberation is itself a mimetic representation of the first liberation movement, its identity emerging out of rivalry with and by exclusion of its model, each becoming the double of the one which preceded it, each creating a new Zambia which has displaced and become the Zambia which preceded it, created in the image of the past. We are therefore in a position to understand the original founding events as a template for a continuing cycle. Zambia is caught in a mythic cycle of collapse and recreation which continues to echo that original template.

[17] Mulford, *Zambia*, 333; Pettman, *Zambia. Security and Conflict*, 65.

There has been some debate as to whether Zambia's conflict is rooted in strictly "ethnic" issues, or whether there are other axes of division.[18] It is clear from an analysis of the 2008 elections in Zambia that Larmer and Fraser on the one hand and Daniel Posner on the other hand are both "half right"[19] in as far as the axes of division are constructed on both ethnic and "class" bases and that both interpretations must make space for the other.[20] This appears to be a relatively new development, as the 2006 and 2002 elections seemed to indicate a strong ethnic component to the country's divisions. It seems that there is, as yet, little discussion on the meaning of these events. Our interpretation, however, provides one satisfactory explanation of what is happening. Girard maintains that identity arises out of the conflict rather than the conflict arising out of a clash of identities. A dialectic relationship emerges between conflict and identity, so that as identity emerges in the conflict there also emerges a series of mythologised justifications for "our identity" and to explain the conflict. As the conflict intensifies, smaller group conflicts become subsumed into one another, new mythologies are generated to justify alliances that did not previously exist, to explain the new group identities which have emerged and to legitimate the new shape given to the conflict. This allows us a great deal of flexibility. Divisions can be both along ethnic and other axes at one and the same time, with one conflict being subsumed into the other until the conflict intensifies and reaches catharsis.

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[18] Cheesman and Hinfelaar, "Parties, Platforms, and Political Mobilization: The Zambian Presidential Election of 2008," 69.
[19] Ibid., 74.
[20] Ibid., 69, 75.

Our understanding of Zambia links together the facts we have uncovered in Zambia: the concepts and stories of "ethnic cousinage"; the changing boundaries of ethnic and language group coalitions; the "both and" of ethnic and class conflict; and in an understanding of identity as fluid, in which alliances, the axes of divisions and group identities can and do change. Our interpretation of the evidence of Zambian life suggests that the mythic cycle which we have discerned will tend to continue to repeat itself. We have suggested that the patterns of the 2008 elections, together with a number of other pieces of evidence, indicate that there is a small movement in the direction of the construction of an inter-ethnic alliance. News reports from within Zambia indicate that an alliance, albeit very unstable, between Sata and Hichelema has been established.[21] There is, it seems, a very strong possibility that this alliance will collapse, but the very fact that it has become possible is a further indication that the cycle is still turning.

Girard's thesis has therefore supplied us with an interesting and effective means of interpreting Zambian society and life. We have been able to answer clearly the first two questions asked in Sociology, "what is happening?" and "why is it happening?". Furthermore, we have been able to offer a tentative insight into what might happen if the mythic cycle is not interrupted.

The third question sociology asks concerns what life is like for Zambians. The methods we have used do enable a clearer insight into what life is like for most Zambians. Any visitor to Zambia will catch glimpses of the profound poverty and deep

[21] Wallen Simwaka, "PF-UPND Pact futile dream - Mukuni," *Zambia Daily Mail* (Lusaka, July 26, 2010), http://www.daily-mail.co.zm/media/news/viewnews.cgi?category=8&id=1280092341 (Accessed 26 July 2010).

deprivation which most Zambians experience. Those working for an aid or development agency or with the local church will gain more insight into life in the compounds - the anxious mother nursing the fevered child without money for the user fees for the government clinic or effective anti-malaria medication, the woman bruised and battered by her partner, the unemployed man so drunk he is attempting to hold a conversation with an ant-hill. What is less obvious is the conflict and rivalry to which we have drawn attention. Even the experienced observer sees Zambians as easygoing and good-humoured. The atmosphere of the compounds, permeated with upbeat music, casual chatter, and the piping voices of the children at play, can seem surprisingly relaxed. Yet tensions simmering below the surface of township life give rise to sudden outbreaks of domestic violence, brawls in the bars, fighting at the scene of a road traffic accident, the "instant-justice" mob murdering someone accused of petty theft. Our methods have enabled an insight into these tensions, which disrupt human relationships and swallow distinctive individuals into the non-being of temporary mob identities. It enables us to become aware of the narratives of exclusion and isolation, hidden behind the inclusive concepts of the extended family and *ubuntu,* which provide the necessary conditions for the Single Victim Mechanism to mark out the elderly, women, the marginal and the criminal, to isolate and vilify a community leader, politician or president. This would remain invisible without the interpretative perspective provided by Girard's work. Yet this profound dis-ease within society is a fundamental part of what life is like for Zambians.

The fourth question asked in Sociology is whether what is observed is good or bad for human beings. The short answer to this question is that nothing we have described is good for human beings. Zambian life is not an unmitigated disaster - people still love, care and reach out to one another - and there is still some hope and a determination to make things better. Our focus has been on the conflicted aspects of Zambian life. While it may be possible to derive a positive outcome from conflict, we have described a repetitive pattern of conflict in which Zambia is seemingly inextricably entangled. The consequent politics of predation leads to the neglect and mismanagement which we have described, the crumbling infrastructure, the all but collapsed health, education and social welfare systems and a justice system which is paralysed by corruption. It would be difficult to arrive at any other conclusion than the one to which we have come. It is a conclusion made in the light of our interpretative framework.

We have been able to propose answers to the four sociological questions which we outlined in our introduction. We have gained some important insights into the nature of Zambia's formation and continuing life. These insights have been uncovered by our engagement with the work of René Girard. It is our use of Girard's theory which enables us to see the full and repetitive nature of the mythic cycle as an entrapment in the “non-being” of mimetic rivalry. It is this which leads us to the theological question of how human beings might come to their true selves.

10.2.2 Assessing Theology

If our understanding of the state of Zambia is an adequate understanding of those elements of Zambian life upon which we have focused, we now need to discuss how far Girard's thesis has contributed to an adequate theological response. Any adequate theology must match all five of Schreiter's criteria discussed in the introduction to this work: The Cohesiveness of Christian Performance, The Worshipping Context and Christian Performance, The Praxis of the Community and Christian Performance, The Judgement of Other Churches and Christian Performance and The challenge To Other Churches and Christian Performance.[22] We must now attempt to assess our theology against these criteria

10.2.2.1 The Cohesiveness of Christian Performance

This criterion is the most complex to measure any theology against - indeed the most complex to actually articulate as a criterion. This is because the Church's Christian performance is, to some extent, dynamic and there is an element of dialectic between culture and Christian doctrinal and ethical insight in which each quite legitimately shapes the other. The long history of the development of the doctrine of the Trinity, the changing perceptions of the role of women in the church, the debates about sexual identity all indicate that a concept of “orthodox” is not always easy to arrive at. Schreiter's appeal to the hierarchy of truths does little to clarify matters. While the idea that certain truths touch more deeply upon the fundamental identity of the Christian community seems simple common sense, there is no real clarity about

[22] Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 117-121.

even the fundamentals of how to go about creating such a hierarchy.[23] New developments, or the recovery of old and neglected insights, may take many years of intense debate before the entire church comes to a conclusion concerning its adequacy, and one must accept that the whole catholic church may never reach a final agreement. The centuries of unresolved acrimony over the *filioque* clause tells us that much. For our purposes it will be enough to be able to justify our theological insights against this criteria in broad terms.

The theological insight we have attempted to create is an understanding of the Trinity. We have noted the roots of this doctrine and some of the difficulties that the church had in arriving at an adequate expression of the concept. The church had to find a way of expressing a careful balance between a substantial notion of person and maintaining the unity of the one God. Our theology has been driven by a similar need to express an understanding of person which is substantial, free from a foundation in exclusion and yet is so in such a manner as not to endanger the unity of the Godhead. We will discuss the manner in which we have used Girard's understanding in this project more fully below. For the time being, it is sufficient to say that we have been unable to draw directly upon the notions of the human person found in Girard and his followers. We have found that these lead too readily to a collapse into Sabellianism. We have similarly been obliged to alter African notions of *ubuntu* in a more substantial direction. On the other hand, we have found the more European notions espoused by Moltmann and Volf are likely to lead to a fragmentation of the Godhead into trithesim. Instead, we have rooted our understanding of the Trinity in a traditional and

[23] Ibid., 118.

widely-held notion, that of the hierarchy within the Godhead in which the Father is the origin of the Godhead. We have noted that our understanding of the Godhead was in accordance with notions of God as love, and as inherently gracious.

In broad terms, therefore, our understanding of the Trinity does accord with the widely-held and well-established understandings of the Trinity and does not require significant alteration of understanding of other widely held doctrinal symbols. Where our theology does diverge somewhat from more traditional views is in the espousal of a kenotic understanding of God. Kenosis is a means of speaking of the self-limitation of God in creation and redemption, and involves a significant modification of the classical understanding of God.[24] One understanding of this kenosis is that God's power is properly seen as "the empowerment of other beings rather than as power over them".[25] Barbour sees five themes in kenotic understandings of God: the rise of modern science and the increasing recognition of the integrity of creation, difficulties with the problem of evil, the reality of human freedom, the Christian understanding of the Cross, and feminist critique of patriarchal models of God.[26] Kenotic models of God are, therefore, a response to the context of the modern and post-modern Western intellectual world. They also represent a recovery of understandings of God in which the implications of the concept of "incarnation" are fully worked out. They take seriously the recovery of the centrality of revelation and the identification of the economic with the immanent Trinity, concepts expounded at length by both Barth and Rahner. The God who revealed the divine self in the folly and weakness of the cross

[24] Ian Barbour, "God's Power: A Process View," in *The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis*, ed. John Polkinghorne and Michael Welker (London: S.P.C.K., 2001), 1.
[25] Ibid., 2.
[26] Ibid., 3-11.

is God as God is in the divine being. Kenotic models of God therefore have strong justification, and have at least the potential, to be more adequate than those of classical theism.

10.2.2.2 The Worshipping Context and Christian Performance

There are few real difficulties inherent in this criterion. Local doctrinal symbols should enable a local community to find locally appropriate forms of worship. We have drawn attention to the idea of the Eucharist as a “subversive memory” which involves a proclamation of the story of God's self-revelation in Christ in such a way that persons are called and enabled into the mimesis of Christ. This must lead directly to worship which is both consistent with Scripture and expressed in local forms as a “subversion from within” of local culture and myths of redemptive violence.

10.2.2.3 The Praxis of the Community and Christian Performance

The idea, inherent in the theology which we propose, that Christian praxis should empower others, is a core Christian value about which there is little real discussion. Our theology issues in a praxis of kenosis in mimesis of God in Christ. Kenosis as understood in our theology is more than simple renunciation: it involves “making space” for others to be or, as Barbour argues, active empowerment of others, becoming poor to make many rich. As a direct consequence, to take up Schreiter's particular concern, this is a theology which cannot, with any integrity, issue in a call to violence. Our theology would meet any call to violence with the immediate suspicion that it represented a turn to the non-being of mimetic contagion. It would not neces-

sarily exclude violence *a priori* but any appeal to, for example, a theology of just war, would have a considerable amount of work to do in order to overcome the inherent resistance to the praxis of violence implicit in our theology.

10.2.2.4 The Judgement of Other Churches and Christian Performance

This is a somewhat more complex criterion in practice than it first seems. Issues such as a judgement upon a theology which legitimates Apartheid, or some other form of oppression, are reasonably clear. A local Church which does not hear and respond to the widespread concerns of the whole Christian community on such subjects has lost its centre in Christ. There is, however, a nice balance to maintain between an appropriate local response which may be quite different from what is accepted practice elsewhere, and reshaping praxis in response to the judgement of the wider Christian community. The tensions within the world-wide Anglican communion over questions of sexual identity are a case in point. In what is a complex ethical debate - which asks how one weighs particular core Christian values against other core Christian values in particular cultural contexts - which community should give ground and reshape its praxis? Any openness to judgement must therefore be on the basis of equality and partnership which maintains the communion of the church and accepts that in many cases "judgement" will require a common exercise of exploration of ethical and pastoral issues in open dialogue rather than an attempt to impose the judgement of one upon another.

The theology which we have proposed fulfils this criteria. Our understanding of the relationships of the Trinity being relationships of unobstructed mimesis would entail seeking a relationship of mutual support and exploration of ethical and pastoral issues. The understandings we propose would advert to the dangers of mimetic rivalry in relationships, and would encourage communities to seek ways to draw back from the spiral of conflict and seek mutually supportive and constructive ways of dealing with disputes. It would also provide a strong foundation for a critique of practices or theologies which promotes forms of blatant victimisation or oppression.

10.2.2.5 The Challenge to Other Churches and Christian Performance

This study has sought to develop an understanding of "persons-in-relationship" to meet the needs of a particular context. Girard's concepts, however, are not confined to a particular cultural setting, but rather give insight into the emergence of all cultural identities through the mimesis of desire. This gives our study a particular dimension, as arising from the study of one context. We believe, however, that our insights into and careful adoption of *ubuntu* as a reflection of the Divine Persons-in-relationship have their own universal application. There are two areas which we wish to briefly point to as areas in which the theology which we have developed here might well make a contribution.

The first of these is the question of the balance between the individual and the communal in society. Bishop Katharine Jefferts-Schori claimed that the great Western heresy is individualism and argued for an adoption of the concept of *ubuntu* as a cor-

rective response.[27] Whether or not she is correct in her diagnosis or fully understands the concept of *ubuntu* she raises an issue which needs discussion, if only in the context of North America. We believe that what we propose here would have a constructive contribution to such a discussion.

The second area to which we wish to briefly draw attention, is the question of ecology and "creation theology". There can be little doubt that human activity has put the planetary ecology under considerable pressure. If we are to take contextualisation seriously then this is a challenge to which the Church must give some serious theological attention. James Lovelock drew attention to his theory that the whole planet, both organic and biological, functions as a system to produce and maintain those conditions which are optimum to life in the edition of *New Scientist* published on February 15, 1975. Unusually for a scientist, Lovelock is willing to raise theological issues.[28] These are increasingly important questions about place of humanity in the interrelated web of creation to which our adoption of the concept of *ubuntu* can offer important insights.

10.2.2.6 The Fidelity of This Theology

The first of the creation myths encountered in the Scriptures asserts that humanity in all its diversity of gender and culture is created in the image of God. The Divine purpose in creation and redemption is therefore that all humanity should be indwelt by and indwell the Divine life: the dance of mutual giving and receiving, the mimesis of love. That the mimesis of love is still far from the life of humanity is obvious. The

[27] Jefferts-Schori, "Opening Address to the TEC General Convention 2009."
[28] "What Is Gaia? Text by James Lovelock," n.d., http://www.ecolo.org/lovelock/what_is_Gaia.html.

church, however, is called to bear witness to the revelation of God which makes us a "new creation", the new *ubuntu* in Christ. That message has a universal as well as a particular element. It is relevant to both highly conflicted and relatively peaceful societies. It is as relevant to the fragmented isolation of modern Western urban lifestyles as to the crushing communal conformity of the rural village in Africa. It is a proclamation of the mission of God in Christ.

We thus believe that we have satisfied Schreiter's criteria sufficiently to claim that our theology can be understood to be faithful to the witness of Scripture and early church tradition and in conformity with the ongoing praxis of the church as the community which seeks to be faithful to that same witness. We must now move to the third level of this test and consider how we have interacted with Girard's work in our theology.

10.3 Girard's Place in this Theology

The understanding of mimesis which Girard has put forward has allowed us to gain a considerable insight into the formation of Zambia, its present circumstances and possible future course. Girard's work grants us an insight into an element of the "systematic distortion" which pervades human life and blinds us to the truth of God in Christ. It encourages us to practise the "hermeneutics of suspicion"[29] in interpreting any culture, or any cultural product. We have seen, for example, in our analysis of *ubuntu* that as an ideal and a challenge to Western individualism it has much to commend it, but our interpretative framework has led us to a recognition that underlying its narrative of inclusion is a concealed praxis of exclusion.

[29] David Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity* (London: SCM, 1988), 73.

Girard's account of Christianity is, however, restricted to his focus on the deconstruction of the Scapegoat Mechanism. Others have taken up Girard's thinking in an effort to shape a broader theological account and in this thesis we have engaged with the work of James Alison. It is at this point that we encountered a problem. Alison's language of "holon" is entirely relational, and does not encompass a "substantial" understanding of person. Two difficulties emerge from this entirely relational account of "person" in the divine. The first is that a person whose personal formation is simply described in terms of relationship is not a permanent "person", but a fluid and temporary focal point in the, essentially undifferentiated, divine substance. This leads us immediately to the consequential second difficulty. For any human person to become an authentic person, a model of authentic personhood is necessary. It is precisely at this point that mimesis opens us to the potential of our full humanity in the image of God. This, however, can only be so if we find in the Trinity a concept of the fully authentic person, one who is not merely a focal point for interpersonal relationships but one whose substance is never "naked" as Zizioulas puts it, but who always subsists as person, as person who wills to exist as persons-in-communion.[30] Alison's difficulty is one which has been inherited from Girard's confinement of his reading of Scriptures to the anthropological.

In order to answer this difficulty we examined a more "substantial" notion of person, moving away from Girard to engage with a broader range of theological thought. This engagement, however, returned us to Girard. Volf establishes his account of personal formation to human persons and the persons of the Trinity without examining the differences or similarities between human and divine persons. As a

[30] Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, 41, 44.

consequence, his understanding of the divine persons has been formulated without due attention to his understanding that human personal individuation is only established by conflict and expulsion. This concept of "person" would lead to a fragmentation of the Trinity into a tri-theism.

The theology we have constructed attempts to reach beyond human persons and the problems of human identity to the person of the Father. Our model of the persons of the Trinity is made necessary by Girard's understanding of the mimetic contagion. It is this contagion which enslaves us. It makes us blind to ourselves, unable to understand our own actions as it entraps us into actions which we know, outside of the mimetic contagion, to be destructive. Even as we find limitations in Alison's work, we recognise that divine persons must be constituted differently from that of a human person, while at the same time there must be an unobstructed invitation to mimesis, both a revelation and the gift of true personhood. Girard's thought has therefore proved vital to those insights we have gained, providing a foundation upon which we have been able to achieve an adequate theological response to the challenges of mission in Zambia. Without Girard's insights we would have found it a good deal more difficult to move beyond the difficulties presented by the theologies of Volf and Moltmann.

We have established this theological understanding as a response to the understanding of the conflicted aspects of Zambian life which have entrapped Zambia's people, poisoned the whole of Zambian life and pushed the state to the brink of failure. Our abstraction has therefore resulted in a deeper insight into the wider whole. In this understanding Girard's work has proved to be vital. Without his insights into the forma-

tion of identity through mimesis, conflict and catharsis we could not have recognised the entirety of what has and continues to happen in Zambia as a "mythic cycle". We, therefore, believe that our thesis has been sufficiently proven, and that it has been possible to construct an adequate and effective theology based upon an adequate and effective understanding of the conflicted aspects of Zambian society based upon the "revelatory anthropology"[31] of René Girard.

[31] Alison, *The Joy of Being Wrong*, 25.

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